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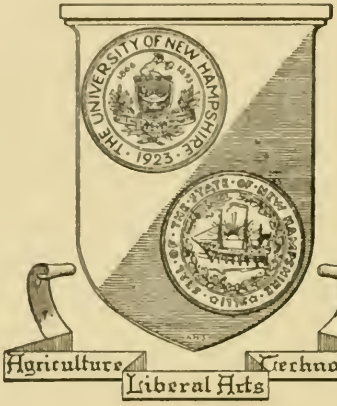

The University
of
New Hampshire

The Girl I Left Behind Me

A MINOR WAR HISTORY

COMPILED FROM

A SOLDIER BOY'S LETTERS TO "THE GIRL I LEFT BEHIND ME"

1861 - 1864

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DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

THE SOLDIER BOY - - - - - MARTIN A. HAYNES
Company I, Second New Hampshire Volunteer Infantry

"THE GIRL I LEFT BEHIND ME" - CORNELIA T. LANE
Now and for more than Fifty Years the Wife of the Soldier Boy

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LAKEPORT, N. H.
PRIVATE PRINT OF MARTIN A. HAYNES
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THIS IS NO. 45

AND IS PRESENTED TO

Edwin P. Thompson

WITH COMPLIMENTS OF

MARTIN A. HAYNES

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PREAMBLE

IN gathering material for a history of the Second Regiment, one of my sources of information was a big bundle of letters, even then yellowing with age—my letters, covering a period of over three years, written to "The girl I left behind me." These—with the elimination of such strictly personal matters as concerned only the two of us—were carefully copied, and the letters then given to the flames. Thirty years later, breaking the seals of that bundle of manuscript, I read with indescribable interest my own story of more than half a century ago. And the whim came upon me to put those scraps of war history into type and print a few copies, especially for members of the family. I can see an opening for only one regret. It will probably destroy an illusion of those four grandchildren—Marjorie and Warren, Martin and Eugene—as to their grandfather's relative importance in the war, and while Grant and Sherman will be moved up one notch on the roll of those who put down the Great Rebellion, I will, very likely, have to be content with third place.

There is lots of history here—minor history, to be sure—and while there is a sequence of events, it is not a connected story, nor even complete. A series of letters rarely is. They do not deal, like Sherman's letters, in the grand strategy of campaigns, but they do give an idea of what the men in the ranks were talking and thinking and doing. Their interest lies almost entirely in the fact that they deal with the trivialities of army life. Here is recorded the small talk of the camp, and many incidents that are too trivial for big history, but are really interesting and worth saving. I have preserved the personality of some of those royal old comrades of mine, who but for these letters would be remembered only through the cold lines of the official record. In these sketches—"right off the bat," as it were—they seem to live again, and one can get a very fair idea of what manner of men they were. It is sometimes with moistened eyes that I catch the step with them again in these pages and in memory live over those stirring days when comradeship was so close and meant so much.

I feel lonesome when I realize that I am almost the last survivor of those who live and move in the following pages. Not one member

of the old "Abbott Guard"—a Manchester company and largely composed of Manchester men—now remains as a living resident of that city, and the survivors, scattered far and wide, can be counted upon the fingers of one hand. As often happened in the old army days, I am once more a straggler, dusty, footsore and weary. But I know that before long I will swing around the bend in the road and come upon the whole precious bunch in bivouac. There will be Rod. Manning and George Slade, Hen. Everett and Bill Ramsdell, "Heenan" and "Gunny," old Dan. Desmond—a hundred of the rarest aggregation that ever touched elbows in a common cause. And with the old familiar whoop they will greet the belated straggler and give him a place at their campfire.

M. A. H.

Lakeport, New Hampshire, October, 1916.

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"Oft in the stilly night,
ere Slumber's chains have bound me,
Fond Memory brings the light
of other days around me."

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LETTERS

I

Camp Union, Concord, *April 28, 1861.*

IF you could look in on this scene you would rate it as about as good a comedy as we ever took in at Bidwell and Marston's. I am writing on a rough board table, and right opposite me the fellow who has set up as company barber is skinning a poor victim alive. I don't think he is much of a barber, and from the spasmodic and at times profane remarks of the patriot he is practicing on, I gather that I am not alone in that opinion.

I have been very busy this week and have hardly had time to write the letters I promised Farnsworth for the *American*. But I am going to give you a little idea of the routine of camp life. We are in camp on the Merrimack County fair grounds, across the river from the city. Our barracks are rough board buildings with ample ventilation through a thousand cracks. One continuous bunk, bedded with straw, extends along one side. Into this we tumble at night, wrapped in our thick army blankets, warm and cozy, and go to sleep after about so much laughing and joking and blackguarding.

The drum beats to marshal us to our meals, and each company falls into line, single file. At the command we march around by the commissary's stand, each man, as he passes, helping himself to plate and dipper with rations upon them. I have seen richer food and a more comprehensive bill of fare, but it is all right and there is plenty of it: fish hash (and I always did like fish hash,) bread (white and brown,) pickles, coffee. No butter, no condiments. But the whole outfit seems to agree with me, and I never was in better health and spirits in my life.

There are now about 550 men here in camp—over 240 from Manchester. It is a rattling jolly crowd, and there is something

doing about all the time. At night we gather around the campfires and amuse ourselves with songs and stories and badinage until nine o'clock, when "Tattoo" sounds and we tumble into our bunk. As many as are needed are detailed each night to stand guard. I have had one round at it—routed out of my warm nest at one o'clock in the morning and posted at the main gate of the camp. It was very cold, and every star was out with a broad grin on as I paraded up and down with a ten-pound musket on my shoulder.

I shall try to get leave to run down to Manchester Saturday and stop over Sunday. I want to "see my sister."

We have not got our uniforms yet. We all expected to have them by the last of the week, so hardly anybody brought any change of clothing. I borrowed a collar of Cochrane [W. H. D.] until I could send home for wardrobe supplies. We have got to go to church at Concord this afternoon, in a body.

There are lots of Manchester folks here today, and I have to stop every minute and shake hands with some friend who comes along. Kelley's [Capt. John L.] recruits came up yesterday. I met them as I was going to the city. Jim Atherton was among them. He brought me lots of things from my friends—pastry from mother, a mince pie from Mrs. Currier, a pin cushion from Augusta Currier, and a great big sugar heart from Mrs. Logue, bless her dear old Irish soul.

Address, Camp Union, Company A, Concord, N. H.

II

Camp Union, *May 1, 1861.*

AM writing in great haste to let you know that the Guard are going to Portsmouth this afternoon, to join the Second Regiment, under Tom Pierce. We get away in a hurry, in order to get position on the right of the regiment—if we can. I will write to you in a day or two—by Sunday, sure. Shall run back to Manchester before we go to the war. Direct letters to Abbott Guard, Portsmouth.

III

Camp Constitution, Portsmouth, *May 5, 1861.*

RECEIVED a letter from you a few moments before the company left Concord, enclosing a note from Sally [Shepherd] and a fine picture of yourself. I don't think, however, it is quite as good as the one I have with me in a little round velvet case.

The Second Regiment are quartered in an old ropewalk, four or five hundred feet long and about eighteen feet wide. Our bunks extend along each side, with a walk through the center and a rack over our heads to place our muskets in. Our quarters and food are much better than they were at Concord.

There are now five companies here, all of us raw recruits fast enough, but the Guard are just conceited enough to imagine their military education is a little more advanced than that of the other fellows. You know, we've been sworn in almost three weeks, and naturally know it all. There was a little friction night before last. A guard from the Great Falls company was posted around the quarters, and word got around that they were acting mighty "cocky." They would not let our men even pass around in the yard, where they had a perfect right to go. I had had no intention of leaving the quarters that night, but was determined not to be cooped up that way. So I recruited two desperate outlaws, and we ran the guard and went over to the city. There we ran across our Orderly Sergeant [George W. Gordon] and he was as mad as we were. At a late hour we marched back to camp. When the guard at the outer gate hollered "Whoa, there!" and tried to block our way, we upset him and went right along. We didn't get a proper challenge down the whole line, but there was a succession of wild calls for the Officer of the Guard. The last I heard as I passed into the barracks was the assurance of the officer, to a sentry who had narrated his tale of woe, that the "Manchester boys" were right—that a proper challenge would doubtless have been heeded and saved all trouble.

Our boys are all pleased with Portsmouth, but are afraid we shall not be ordered away as soon as if we had stayed in Concord. There are many points of interest here—the navy yard, where 1100 men are employed fitting out three large war vessels, and the forts down the harbor, where they are putting in garrisons and mounting heavy guns.

Nich. Biglin, *alias* "Heenan," one of our boys, had a thumb badly crushed in showing how strong he was. Up at the arsenal there are rows of big iron cannon, relics of the war of 1812, resting at each end on blocks. "Heenan" lifted an end of one of these, which was quite a feat, but his grin of triumph faded out when he let the gun back smash onto one thumb.

I received today a very welcome present from the Manchester High School—a splendid waterproof blanket. John Johnson is the committee to distribute similar favors among the M. H. S. boys in camp here.

I am detailed for guard and my round commences soon. You need have no fear that I shall not run up to Manchester before leaving here.

IV

Camp Constitution, Portsmouth, *May 11, 1861.*

HAVE been expecting all this week that I would have an opportunity to run up home today, but have just learned that Gen. Stark has issued orders that no man is to leave camp till the regiment is uniformed, which he expects will be next Monday or Tuesday. There is a rumor circulating that this regiment will not be ordered into active service unless we enlist for three years or until the war is ended; but Fred. Smith told me, yesterday, he would warrant we should be ordered off within ten days. If we are not, I think nearly all the boys will enlist for the war. We started out to see the rebels put down, and we are not willing to go home without seeing it done and having a hand in it. I do not think the war will last more than a few months.

Since our little affair with the Commissary we have had first rate grub. [This refers to the "rag hash war," when the Abbott Guard rebelled against the rations and marched over to the city, in a body, for something to eat.] We were placed under arrest when we got back and kept under guard twenty-four hours. I gave a pretty plain statement of the affair in my letter to the *American*, and yesterday down came Fred. Smith to see about it. With one of the Governor's *Aides* he went around and investigated pretty thoroughly, and there are already signs of a decided improvement.

V

Camp Constitution, Portsmouth, *May 16, 1861.*

YOU have, doubtless, been expecting me every day for a week. I wrote Tuesday throwing out a hint that I might be up Wednesday; but when Wednesday came there was no move to uniform us, and I had to wait. But today something definite *has* transpired. We are officially informed that an opportunity will be given us to re-enlist for three years or the war, or to be discharged. We can take it or leave it. The Abbott Guard had a meeting this afternoon, and a majority voted to offer the services of the company to the President, for the war. Several of them will not go, but I, of course, could not be dogged back to Manchester while the company is headed for the South. A possible three years from home is a long stretch, but you can be pretty sure the war will not last many months. At any rate, my fortunes are cast with the Abbott Guard, and its fortunes I am bound fo follow, wherever they lead.

General Abbott told us, this afternoon, that we should all have a chance to go home and put our affairs in order.

VI

Camp Constitution, Portsmouth, *May 19, 1861.*

THE regiment is now uniformed—the queerest-looking uniform in the world. You have probable seen some like them in the streets of Manchester, on the First Regiment boys. The suit is gray throughout, with a light trimming of red cord. The coat is a "swallow-tail," with brass buttons bearing the New Hampshire coat-of-arms; a French army cap to top off with.

We have the Manchester Cornet Band here with us now—they came yesterday. They played in front of the barracks last evening —lots of the good old tunes that you and I have enjoyed together, many a time.

VII

Camp Constitution, Portsmouth, *June 2, 1861.*

DO not know how much longer we will be here, but not more than a few days—perhaps not over a week. Yesterday the First Maine Regiment passed through here. I wish this regiment had been in their place.

VIII

Camp Constitution, Portsmouth, *June 7, 1861.*

EXPECTED I would have a chance to write a long letter to-day. I was on guard last night, and in the natural course should have had the day to myself. But our company was mustered this forenoon—sworn in for three years' service—and the regiment has been marching and parading all the afternoon. I was never more tired in all my life. We shall be off in a day or two. Next Tuesday is the time set, but we may not get away until a day or two later. We are very busy getting ready to leave.

A number of the boys have taken a notion to get married before leaving for the front, among the number being Eugene Hazewell, E. Norman (nicknamed "Enormous") Gunnison, and Johnny Ogden, the round-faced Englishman I pointed out to you down by the cemetery, one day.

We have lots of fun with the fellows who come creeping into the barracks late at night or early in the morning. All sorts of traps are set, and some one of them generally gets the bird. Sometimes it is the old trick of tinware over the door, which is bound to rouse the whole camp, no matter how carefully the door is opened; or a gun box set on end in the aisle; or a rope stretched across it.

Just to bring myself to a realization of how long the three years ahead ought to seem, I have been measuring back to events that transpired three years ago. Three years seems a long time looking into the future, and yet many things that took place three years ago do not seem so very far away. In the depot at Manchester I met Ike Sawyer, who has just got back from sea. I asked him how long he had been gone this time, and he said, "Over three years." I was

surprised that it was so long, and hope the coming three will sort of shorten up in the same way,

Our company is now stocking up on mascots. The latest additions are a splendid Newfoundland dog and a pretty maltese cat.

Nich. Biglin is going up tomorrow to bid good bye to a large and enthusiastic circle of female admirers. Just now he and Dan Mix are engaged in an animated dispute as to whether a man will get tight on gin sweetened with sugar sooner than if sweetened with molasses, and "Heenan" proposes that they go out and experiment.

IX

Camp Constitution, Portsmouth, *June 12, 1861.*

STILL in Portsmouth, in spite of all prophecies, augurs and omens. The excuse now is that the baggage wagons and some other camp equipage are not ready. The time now set is next Monday, but I am not counting on going before Wednesday, as a precaution against being disappointed. All our baggage wagons, harnesses, horses, and other field stuff are in Concord, and it is more than probable that we shall go there to get it, and thence to New York through Manchester. I hope so, as it will give me a chance to see you once more just for a moment.

I was somewhat surprised to hear that Frank had gone to Washington. I wish he was going with this regiment; but I shall have as good care as I could wish for if I am sick, as my uncle, Dr. John, is going out with us in the hospital department. My aunt wrote me that if the doctor went she should put on the breeches and go too.

And, by the way, I am not sure that you would recognize me now that I have followed the prevailing fashion and had my flowing locks shaved off close to my scalp.

Yesterday morning, before breakfast, a party of us boys went down to the beach and had a glorious frolic, swimming, digging clams, and catching crabs.

In the regimental organization we are designated as Company I. It is explained to us that this gives us a post of honor, as the color company, in the center of the regiment; but I am a little skeptical.

The boys have been singing sentimental songs, but just now have switched off onto cheers over the taking of Big Bethel, in Virginia, by Gen. Butler. "*Hooray!*" The way they are tearing it off is a caution. All are at fever heat to be off and helping in the war.

V

Headquarters Second Regt. N. H. V.,
Portsmouth, *June 10, 1861.*

WE know, at last, just when we are going away—"*sure.*" Next Thursday, at 7 o'clock in the morning, we are off. As we go direct to Boston, and not through Manchester, it is good bye until I come home from the war.

Si. Swain is under guard today. He refused to do duty and invited Rod. Manning, one of the sergeants, to go to H——ot place.

My ribs are sore from laughing over the regatta we had today out on the mill pond. Some of the boys gathered together from somewhere a number of hogsheads, halved by being sawed in two, and went voyaging in them. They were not a very manageable craft. They rolled around every-which-way, capsized, collided, and went through all sorts of ridiculous stunts.

We have had issued to us blue flannel blouses, thin, loose, and far more comfortable than our uniform dress coats.

Some of the boys have been fishing down at the fort today. They brought home a lobster they caught, and while a kettle of water is heating to boil him in, are teasing the poor fellow with sticks. "Heenan" is taking an active part in the persecution. He holds up long enough to say to me, "Tell her I want to keep the first two months' pay to buy my liquor with; but after that I will remit enough so that, with her own efforts, the family will be insured from want."

XI

Headquarters Second Regt. N. H. Vols.,
Portsmouth, *June 19, 1861.*

OFF we go at 7 o'clock tomorrow morning, and everything is bustle and excitement. Have seen lots of Manchester folks here within a day or two. Mary Rice was on the parade ground yesterday. Dr. Nelson, Henry A. Gage, A. C. Wallace, policeman Bennett, Parker Hunt and his mother, and many more of my friends and acquaintances. We have been drilling today with knapsacks and equipments on, and my shoulders are as lame as if I had been beaten with a club. Twenty rounds of cartridges have been issued to us. You will direct letters to Company I, 2d Regt. N. H. Vols., Washington, D. C. We may not be at Washington, but there is no mail south of there, and it will be distributed from that point.

There was quite an excitement here last night, resulting from a fire on the frigate "Santee." It was set near the magazine, in which was forty tons of powder.

XII

Washington, D. C., *June 25, 1861.*

HERE we are at last, in Washington, safe and sound, but stewed with the heat. We left Portsmouth on schedule time, Thursday morning. At Boston, we met with a grand reception. The boys will never forget the superb collation that was served us there—not merely the toothsome meats and substantials, but all the little niceties, such as strawberries and cream, &c. From Boston we went to Fall River, where we took the steamer "Bay State" for New York. I roosted on the hurricane deck and never had a better night's sleep in my life. At New York the Sons of New Hampshire gave us a flag and a feast, after which we were ferried to Amboy, 16 miles, and took cars for Baltimore. I got in a good night's sleep between Harrisburg and Baltimore, and Sunday noon we arrived in Washington.

Our camp reminds me of the old-fashioned tin oven my grandmother used to set before the fireplace to bake biscuits in. On the sunny slope of a ridge, with not a tree for shade and shelter. Hot!

And the flies! I know now how to pity those poor old Egyptians. We have plenty of unusual happenings now. I am not sure but that some of the boys are seeing spooks. Sunday night several of the sentinels reported exchanging shots with prowlers about the camp. I was on guard that night, where there were plenty of bushes, but the best I could do I couldn't find anything to get excited over. Dan Mix, one of the teamsters, says he was fired at four times while coming into camp with his team last night. And it is currently reported that the Zouaves, camped next to us, captured a spy a day or two ago, and he will be hanged today or tommorrow. I can understand how some secessionists around here might be tempted to take a pot shot at a Yankee sentinel out of pure cussedness; but I haven't got it through my head yet what a spy could find to spy out that is n't perfectly open to anybody who cares to look about in broad daylight, unmolested.

Just before I left Portsmouth I had a letter from my mother that touched a sensitive nerve. My dear old Grandmother Knowlton came down from New London to see me, but I had just gone back to Portsmouth. As the first and favorite grandchild I always filled a big space in her little world. She mourned over her disappointment, and grieved that she should never see me again. My mother could not even conceal her own blue streak. She and father were in Boston when we went through, and I had a chance just to shake hands and say good bye to them.

I have seen Dave Perkins here two or three times. [David L., of Manchester, then connected with one of the Departments.] He asked me if I wanted to send any word to that little girl away up in New Hampshire, for he was going back in a few weeks. I gave him lots of messages, and have no doubt he will forget every one of them before he sees you.

Our grub, since we got here, has not been quite up to the Astor House standard, but the army stores will be here to-day, which will improve the bill of fare. So far it has consisted of hard bread bearing the stamp "1810"—whatever that may signify—ham or salt pork and coffee.

XIII

Camp Sullivan, Washington, *July 2, 1861.*

SATURDAY was quite an eventful day with me. I went over to the city on a sight-seeing trip with Hen. Morse, one of my tentmates [killed, three weeks later, at Bull Run.] Went first to the Capitol, and viewed the paintings and statuary. Thence to the Smithsonian Institute and spent several hours in its wonderful museum, where I could have interested myself for days. From there to the Washington monument. Among the stone blocks there, contributed from various sources and to be built into the walls, was one inscribed: "*From the Home of Stark. From the Ladies of Manchester, N. H.*" We wound up our sight-seeing in the parks around the President's house; and when we got back to camp I was tired enough to pile onto my blankets and go to sleep.

Not much sleep, though. I had hardly lost myself when somebody shook me and said the Captain wanted me up at his tent. I went up, in no very amiable mood. Found Commissary Goodrich there, who said he wanted me to be his clerk. I chewed the matter over and decided I'd take the assignment. It relieves me from guard duty and drill, and gives me very nice quarters with the Commissary. I jumped into my work the next day—Sunday. Issued three days' rations to the regiment, and had a pretty busy time keeping track of the provisions. Monday and Tuesday I had my hands full straightening up accounts and opening a set of books; and not until today have I had any chance to write letters and attend to private affairs.

Last night we had a rain—and *such* a rain! The board floor in my tent kept me high and dry above the flood, but the fellows down in camp came pretty near being carried out to sea.

I am not starving now. I don't think anybody does in the commissary department. Yesterday I had all the cherries I could eat, and some day, when I have a little leisure, I think I'll go blackberrying.

XIV

Camp Sullivan, Washington, *July 7, 1861.*

YESTERDAY I received orders to deliver four days' rations of beef, bread and coffee, and the cooks were ordered to cook the meat, ready for a march. We are now expecting marching orders at any moment. I have an idea that they will come about night, so as to avoid marching in the heat of the day. I am going, you bet. Captain Goodrich told me this camp is not to be broken up at present. The commissary stores are to be left here, the tents to remain standing, with the surplus baggage, all under guard of the cripples and invalids. When it came to details, I found the plan was for the Captain to go with the expedition, while I remained behind to look after things in camp. That didn't suit me; so I asked him to hunt up another clerk, and notified the Captain that I wanted my gun again and to go with the company.

Where we are going we do not know, but inasmuch as twelve regiments are going with us, and we are to take no knapsacks, but four days' rations and a large supply of ammunion, it is fair to presume we will be looking for trouble. I hope we are going down to Manassas to drive the secessionists out of that stronghold. Very likely some of the boys have not many days to live, but they are jolly eager to be off, and will give a good account of themselves.

I went to a ride into the country yesterday to find a boarding place for Captain Goodrich's wife.

XV

Camp Sullivan,
Washington, D. C., *Sunday, July 14, 1861.*

WE are still here in Camp Sullivan, our marching orders having been countermanded at the last moment; but are sure to be off before many days. We have been expecting to march today, but probably will not.

A day or two ago there was a dreadful accident in our brigade. The Rhode Island battery were drilling upon the parade ground in front of our camp, when the ammunition in one of the limbers exploded and the three men seated on the box were hurled high in

THE OLD ROPE WALK BARRACKS, CAMP CONSTITUTION, PORTSMOUTH

the air, two being killed instantly—literally blown all to pieces. I was on the spot almost instantly, and with the single exception of the Pemberton Mills horror, which I viewed as a newspaper reporter, it was the most sickening sight I ever saw.

We certainly do have gay times here in camp. The days are frightfully hot, but the evenings are cool and nice, and somehow or other the camp scenes then remind me—and I can't tell just how—of an old-fashioned country fair. I suppose it's the canvas, the lighted tents like open booths, the men swarming hither and thither, the bustle and frolic and singing—and we have some very fine singers in our company.

P. S.—Monday Morning.—We have received orders to march tomorrow at two o'clock, with three days' rations and without camp equipage. The orders are imperative and we are sure of going. We shall probably see some of the business we came for before long. I will write at the first opportunity and let you know what happens.

XVI

Washington, D. C., *July 24, 1861.*

I INTENDED to write to you yesterday, but after what I have been through in the past week I simply couldn't get up steam.

Last Tuesday—a week ago yesterday—this regiment crossed the Potomac at Long Bridge, with the other regiments and batteries of Burnsides' brigade, and advanced into Virginia. Saturday night we were encamped about a mile from Centerville. At two o'clock Sunday morning we were up and on the march, and at ten o'clock we came upon the secessionists at Bull Run and engaged them. The battle lasted several hours, when we were obliged to withdraw. It was a very disorderly retreat. We expected to be followed sharply, of course, and there was no halt worth talking about until we straggled into Washington, every man for himself. Coming and going we got in about sixty miles of travel, to say nothing of several hours on the battlefield. I was about all in when, midday Monday, I reached the Virginia end of Long Bridge. We were then inside the fortifications, and there were kettles of hot coffee and boxes of hard

bread set out for everybody to help themselves. It did seem as if I never could drag myself over to our camp. But I finally negotiated with a huckster who was over there with his team, and having purchased his remaining stock of pies and distributed them among the crowd of refugees, he gave me a ride across the bridge and up into the city well toward Camp Sullivan.

The battle was the hardest fought so far, and the losses on both sides were heavy. At the roll call this morning 175 were missing from the Second Regiment, but this number will doubtless be cut down as stragglers come in. Of my eight tentmates, six went. Two [Harvey Holt and Henry Morse] were killed outright, and one [George F. Lawrence] was severely wounded in the head. I got my little upset at the very tail-end of the fight. The regiment had crossed over to the opposite hill, and about a hundred of us had taken cover in a cut in the road. We had a house on our front, some secessionist cannon up near it, and enough of the enemy to give us a real lively time. There was a rail fence along the edge of the cut, and I rested my musket on one of the rails, and carefully sighted on a fellow who seemed to be showing off. Then something happened. A cannon ball struck the rail, one of the fragments hit me in the head and neck, and I rolled down the bank. I heard one of the boys cry out "Mart is killed!" and for about half a minute I didn't know but what I was. But when we had to break for the rear, a few minutes later, I had no trouble in keeping up with the procession.

In all my life I never suffered from thirst as I did that day. On the advance, our regiment was right at the ford of Bull Run creek when the head of the column sighted the enemy. A staff officer rode back with the announcement and called to the men to fill their canteens. I waded up a few feet and filled my canteen with good clear river water. A little while after, I took a drink, spat out the tepid mouthful in disgust, and emptied the canteen. I learned my lesson and will never do that again. Before that day was over I would have given dollars for one square drink of that same water. On the retreat I one time scooped up a few sips from a mud puddle through which men and horses and wheels were ploughing their way. Before reaching Centerville I filled up clear to the ears from a little trickling rivulet, and filled my canteen as well. Laid down in the

old bivouac, and went to sleep. After two or three hours was waked up and told to keep agoing. The old thirst was on me, but when I lifted my canteen it was empty—drained to the last drop. If I could have got hold of that sneak thief the casualty list would have been one bigger, I think.

You will be pleased to know that "Heenan" behaved finely. His tin dipper, hanging by his side, was desperately wounded—otherwise all right. Frank Wasley had one or more fingers hurt by a bullet. Col. Marston was not more than twenty or thirty feet from me when he was shot in the shoulder. It was rather a wild scene just then—a dead man stretched out here and there; a stream of wounded men staggering or being helped to the rear; the Rhode Island battery, shrouded in smoke and with several horses down, soaking it to the batteries across the valley, on the other hill. A little later we were farther down the slope, lined up in a cornfield, helping drive the enemy out of woods and bushes where they were strongly posted. While here we saw the Black Horse, a famous secessionist cavalry corps, charge the Fire Zouaves, and then go back with lots of empty saddles.

I find I must hurry to get this into the mail, but will write again in a day or two.

XVII

Camp Sullivan, Washington, D. C., *July 30, 1861.*

JUST to let you know that I was alive and kicking, I wrote a week ago, but did not write half I wanted to. I got a letter from Roger [Woodbury] a few days ago. He has an idea of enlisting in the Third Regiment. I advised him, as he is situated, not to do it. It may seem inconsistent in me to advise him against doing what I myself have done; but he has others dependent on him, while I have not.

Things are getting straightened out so we can now tell about how many men we lost in the unfortunate battle of Bull Run. Our total loss in killed, wounded and missing is only about eighty or ninety. I lost some of my best friends. Mose Eastman was wounded in the leg. I saw him carried to the rear. If still living he is probably a

prisoner. Frank Wasley has had a finger cut off. I had a letter from mother today. She says they do not know yet, in Manchester, who is missing, and there is the deepest anxiety there.

By the way, I may as well remind you that this is my birthday, and I am nineteen years old. If some one with the gift of prophecy had told me, a year ago, that at my next birthday I would be in the army and a participant in the greatest battle ever fought on this continent, wouldn't it have seemed a wild piece of fortune telling?

XVIII

Camp Sullivan, Washington, D. C., *August 5, 1861.*

THE heat today is something awful. We are all just about dead from it—lying about camp and sweltering. I received your letter of the 30th and will answer your questions in turn.

Charlie Farnam is in our regiment as a drummer.

All the boys you specially inquired after are well. Hen. Pillsbury inquires often where "the woman" is and how she is getting along.

As to the talk that we are going to be beaten in this war, that is the veriest *bosh*. The next time we march towards Richmond we will have force enough to crush our way. We were not beaten this time in the fighting, but by an unfortunate combination of adverse circumstances. Had Johnston's division been held back by Patterson, as it was expected it would be, we should have beaten them anyway. And even with that reinforcement I am not sure we would not have whipped them in the end, but for that unaccountable panic communicated to two or three broken regiments by teamsters who had driven their teams into places where they were not wanted, and who took the order to change positions as a signal for retreat. Then everything went to pieces before anybody really knew what had happened.

My tentmates Holt and Morse were both awfully nice boys. Holt was the first man killed in the regiment. He was not with the company, but with the corps of pioneers, a detachment of axe-men, made up of details from the various companies. He was killed very early in the action, while crouching in a ditch, by a piece of shell

which struck him in the shoulders. Morse was killed late in the day. The regiment was crossing from the slope where it had been fighting over to the opposite hill. It was halted in the valley, while Gen. Burnside rode up the hill a little piece and took an observation. We were under very sharp fire from a battery further up. I heard a shot from it come roaring down the slope, ending in a "thud" which told it had got a victim down the line. Looking back, I saw a prostrate form sprawled in the dust of the road, with Johnny Ogden bending over it. "Who is it, Johnny?" I called back. "Hen. Morse," he answered me.

We expect to change our position before long—are hoping to spend a few of these hot weeks at Fort McHenry, in Baltimore, or at Fortress Monroe. I don't know where the idea started from, but it would be fine.

I hear from Manchester often. Roger Woodbury, George Dakin, Ruthven Houghton and Frank Morrill have enlisted into the Third Regiment. How I wish that crowd was in this company!

Some of our officers are now in New Hampshire after recruits to fill the gaps in the Second Regiment.

XIX

Bladensburg, Md., *August 12, 1861.*

DIDN'T wake up very early this morning; but when I did I got up, quick—rolled out of a puddle of water I had been sleeping in. We moved over to this camp last Friday morning, and are in a most delightful location. It is about five miles from Washington, on the field where the battle of Bladensburg was fought in 1814. There is a little village, a little river, little hills, &c., and plenty of the very best of water close at hand. The place has quite a reputation for its mineral springs. There is one right in the village, and the water is *so* clear, *so* cool, *so* refreshing—only the merest suggestion of a mineral flavor.

It is surprising how many of my old friends I manage to run across. Gust. Hutchinson, who used to work with me in the old *American* office, is in the Massachusetts Eleventh, which is camped here. Almost every day I run across somebody I have known before.

August 15.—I have been about used up for the past two days, but now I *must* finish my letter. You can assure your rebel-sympathizing friends that the rebels cannot take the capital, and I do not believe they will attempt it. I hope they will try.

I have just received a paper with a list of the second company of Abbott Guards. I note that Roger Woodbury, Frank Johnson, Johnny Stokes and others of my old friends are in it. My uncle John has gone home. The climate did not agree with him as well as it does with me.

XX

Camp Union,
Bladensburg, Md., *August 25, 1861.*

PRESIDENT LINCOLN, accompanied by Secretaries Seward and Welles, reviewed the brigade this forenoon. Friday afternoon we were reviewed by Gen. McClellan, who is next in command to Gen. Scott. We expect to stay here several weeks—perhaps till the first of October. We are so very pleasantly situated that we would not object to lying around here for a few weeks. If the rebels should be bold enough to attack Washington there will be lots of music. The city is being fortified against any such emergency. Our brigade is working on a fort near here that would prove a hard nut to crack. Three of our regiments were at Bull Run. The First Massachusetts was in the Thursday fight at Blackburn's Ford, and the Eleventh Massachusetts was in the Sunday fight.

There was a most laughable scene here today. Colonel Fiske's horse ran away with him and bolted smack into [Lieut.] Joe Hubbard's tent. Down went tent, horse and rider all in one grand mix-up. And while they were trying to save something from the wreck out of the ruins crawled the worst-scared man ever seen in these parts since Bull Run. He was reading a newspaper, all unsuspecting, when the heavens fell.

A day or two ago I read a letter from a daughter of old John Brown. It was written to a brother-in-law of hers in my company —Willard P. Thompson—whose brother, her husband, was one of John Brown's men killed at Harper's Ferry two or three years ago. It was a gem of patriotic sentiment, and with a fine womanly instinct she expressed her sorrow that Avis, who was her father's jailer, was killed at Bull Run—he was so very kind to the old prisoner.

XXI

Camp Union,
Bladensburg, Md., *Sept. 4, 1861.*

ORDERS came tonight to pack and be ready to march at a minute's notice with two days' cooked rations. I learn from headquarters that we are going over into Virginia again. We want a chance to try the Southern Chivalry on again, and I guess we will have it before long. We hear there was a scrimmage over there today, and our troops took possession of Munson's Hill, which the rebels had fortified. It is after ten o'clock at night. "Taps" beat an hour ago, and I must close. Perhaps in my next letter I will tell of a battle, and if I do, it will be a battle won.

XXII

Camp Union,
Bladensburg, Md., *Sunday, Sept. 15, 1861.*

I AM somewhat surprised to hear that M—— has, as you write me, given her secession-sympathizing lover the mitten. I can not work up any more sympathy for a rebel in New Hampshire than for one in Virginia, and a Manchester man who would jubilate over our defeat at Bull Run ought to be taken out into a back pasture and shot. As for my never getting home again, I'm not worrying about that. I went through Bull Run safe and sound, and I don't believe we will ever see a harder fight than that, and there is no reason why I should not come out of the rest of the battles equally well.

There has been some sort of a shake up in the commissary department. Capt. Goodrich has had three clerks since I got out, all of whom threw up the position. He and the Brigadier General [Hooker] didn't hitch up together very well, and now, I understand, he has quit the service.

Am I homesick? you ask. Not a bit. And that does not mean that I would not like to see you and the "old folks at home." We are very comfortably situated just now. No signs of immediate starvation. Government rations are excellent, and we can piece out with any luxury we are willing to pay for. And drill and camp duties are so arranged that we have much time for pleasure.

I got a letter from Roger Woodbury Wednesday. He is camped on Long Island and is enjoying camp life immensely. The Division he is in will consist of ten New England regiments, and is probably designed to operate somewhere along the coast when the time comes for the grand move.

We are building a line of forts to encircle Washington on the north. Details from this brigade have worked upon two near our camp. One of these now has twenty guns mounted, commanding the country for miles around. How soon we will move, we cannot tell—perhaps in a day, perhaps not for a month. We have two days' rations constantly in readiness. The Massachusetts First has gone over into the country somewhere for a few days.

I ran into a little bunch of excitement this noon. Had gone over to a huckster's on the road running between the camps of the Pennsylvania Twenty-sixth and Massachusetts Eleventh, to buy a pie for dinner. Saw a commotion over in the Eleventh camp which seemed worth looking into, so I went over. Had just passed the camp guard when I saw one of the boys rushing a negro out of the crush and over to the Pennsylvania camp. The negro was almost paralyzed with fright. He was a runaway, and had been with the Massachusetts boys quite a little time. His master got track of him and sent two slave catchers to get him. But when they tried to execute their mission, some of the boys promptly knocked them down and got the negro out of the way.

XXIII

Camp Union,
Bladensburg, Md., *Sept. 22, 1861.*

LAST Wednesday I went down to the Third Regiment and saw lots and lots of the old crowd. Roger Woodbury had not come on yet from Long Island. I met Frank Morrill, Jack Holmes, Ruthven Houghton, and many others. Frank and I had such a good long talk over the happy old times. The regiment is camped about three miles from here, and the men are worrying for fear they may be ordered back to Long Island.

So you think, do you, it would be a good plan to go down to the city once in a while for something good to eat. Why, bless you, we

don't have to do that now. We have sutlers here, and hucksters out from the city, and farmers with their truck, and can buy most anything we want to piece out the army rations, from sweet potatoes to pound cake.

XXIV

Camp Union,
Bladensburg, Md., *Sept. 29, 1861.*

COMPANY I goes on guard today, and I can manage to pick out a little time for writing letters. I wish you could be in camp here Sundays and see the colored people come in. Sunday is the negro's holiday, and they swarm into camp with their apples, peaches, chickens, or whatever they happen to have that can be turned into money or old clothes. Each one has a basket, with a crooked stick on which to swing it over the shoulder. These plantation negroes—mostly slaves—are a quaint lot, not a bit like the bright colored people you see north. We used to think the stage negro at the minstrel show was a burlesque. He wasn't.

Fast Day some four hundred of the regiment marched down to the camp of the Third and had a jolly time. Roger had got along, but I saw him for only a moment. Frank Morrill and I took a most cheerful stroll down to that most cheerful public institution, the Congressional Cemetery, and saw the tombs of Gen. Macomb, Gov. Clinton, and no end of generals, commodores and other big men.

The Fourth N. H. Regiment passed here today. I do not know where they will camp. I have many acquaintances in its ranks.

Have you read about the taking of Munson's Hill? Was n't that a pretty neat trick the rebels turned on us—mounting stovepipes and wooden cannons on the forts? The boys are borrowing trouble now through fears that McClellan will not take us with him when he advances over into Virginia. It would be decidedly ungrateful not to give us a chance to square accounts for Bull Run and the run we made after it. I shall never forgive the rebels for that affair until we have paid them in their own coin.

The First Michigan Regiment came in today and camped right beside us. They were at Bull Run as a three months' regiment, and enlisted again, for three years, when their time was up.

The fort we have been working on is about ready for business. It mounts thirteen 32-pounder guns, and would be a lovely thing for a few thousand men to butt their heads against.

The days are very hot and the nights terribly cold. I put my overcoat on and wrap my blanket about my legs and feet when I bunk down nights, and then I am almost frozen. This is a good time to catch the fever and ague, and I may be in for it.

XXV

Camp Union,
Bladensburg, Md., *Sunday, Oct. 6, 1861.*

THE Fourth Regiment are encamped about two miles below here. I went down to see them one day last week and had a good time. Saw Kin. Foss, Sam. Porter, "Tulip" Bunten and many others. As I went strolling through the camp, I noted one street down ahead where there appeared to be half a dozens fights going on, in various stages of development. I said to myself, I'll bet a dollar that's Charlie Hurd's company. I won the bet.

The Third Regiment has gone to Annapolis. This afternoon we are to be reviewed by Gen. McClellan. He has reviewed us once before, and it may be that he intends putting us ahead somewhere, and that we shall leave Bladensburg before long.

So you want me to learn a lot of songs, do you? Well, I have anticipated your wishes and already commenced. There is one pathetic local ballad that I have been practicing on and can do pretty well for a green hand. Here is the first verse, which will give you some idea of its high artistic merits:

"A grasshopper sat on a sweet pertater vine,
On a sweet pertater vine, on a sweet pertater vine,
When a turkey gob-u-ler acoming up behind
Just yanked him off of that sweet pertater vine."

Then there is another that is very popular with the boys. It is easy to learn, notwithstanding there are 147 verses to it. I will give you the first verse, and when you've got that you've got the whole thing, for they're all alike. One, two, sing:

"John Brown he knew that his father was well,
And his father he knew that John Brown he was well,
For when John Brown knew that his father was well,
His father he knew that John Brown he was well."

Our entire company was out yesterday cutting down woods that interfered with the range of the guns on the forts we have been building. My mother, having in recollection her experiences with the family wood box when I was a boy, would probably have advised against taking me out. But I am inclined to think that, as a wood chopper I achieved some reputation this time, as after I had gnawed down a tree of considerable size some of the boys called the others to come and admire "Mart's stump."

Well, I have strung out a long letter, and some of it you can credit to the delightful surroundings and conditions under which I am working. Here is the picture: A big tent—the Quartermaster's—overlooking from its back a railroad cut twenty-five or thirty feet deep; an enormous oak tree deeply shading a large space, with a delicious breeze rustling its branches; several of the boys sitting around reading the newspapers, chatting, and looking down upon the numerous trains that pass below; and your own correspondent, with a big pile of army overcoats for a backrest.

XXVI

Camp Union,
Bladensburg, Md., *Oct. 21, 1861.*

WE are having some of the worst weather the almanac can dish out to us, and the hospital is full of sick men, some seriously ill. I have, myself, been off duty for several days, but am now on deck again all right. It is surprisingly cold, and tents are not the warmest sleeping apartments in the world. I hope they will take us off down south before long or give us good barracks.

I had a letter from my uncle Nathaniel the other day. [Nathaniel Columbus Knowlton of New London.] He wrote that after he went back from Boston, where he went to see me off, a girl came to my father's house, whom they introduced as Miss Lane, and who seemed to be very well acquainted. About a month after, Addie told him who you was. He approves.

The two aunts you met at my house are all right. Aunt Polly is the wife of my father's eldest brother, Joshua. Aunt Olivia was reared down south, in a Catholic seminary at Charleston, South Carolina. Her father, Captain Bailey, was an old time sea captain. Until recently she has been very decided in her southern predilections. But a summer spent in Charleston two years ago changed her sentiment very radically. Her husband—my uncle William—is in the Massachusetts Eighteenth, which is now at Baltimore.

There is quite a little force of cavalry here with us now. They make a brave show in their drilling. Gen. Hooker, who commanded this brigade, now has a division, and Col. Cowdin, of the First Massachusetts, commands the brigade. I believe we shall move from here before long. The boys are getting impatient, and will be very discontented if they hold us here much longer.

You write me of your fingers being cold. If you could only know how cold I am this very minute, you would realize the pleasares of letter-writing in camp. It is a cold day, and I am writing in a wide open tent, which is just the same as out of doors. But we have lots of good times, notwithstanding the cold; and when we get around the campfires at night, we talk of home and the jolly times we will have when we get back to Manchester.

XXVII

Hill Top, St. Charles County, Md.,
October 28, 1861.

YOU will take note that we have changed our location at last. We are now forty or fifty miles below Washington, on the Potomac river, below Budd's Point. The other side of the river is lined with rebel batteries for a distance of ten miles, up and down, and we are here with ten or twelve thousand men to watch them. We have cavalry and artillery with us. With our regiment is Doubleday's battery of 12- and 32-pounders. Most of the Fort Sumter men are in this battery. We left Bladensburg Thursday and got here last night—a march of four days. As we were in heavy marching order, all our earthly possessions strapped or hung to us in some way, you can be sure it was a pretty tired crowd that landed in here.

Tuesday Morning.—I tried to write last night, but it was so cold I had to give up. We are camped down in a deep hollow, where the sun doesn't get in till pretty late. Every morning the ground is white with frost. It takes all our dry goods to keep us anywhere near comfortable, day or night. Our grub is neither rich nor varied, but it appears to agree with me—with what I have been able to pick up on the side. A man who is enterprising can occasionally get hold of a piece of fresh meat. Until last night, since leaving Bladensburg, every man has been his own cook. Our tin plates served very well as stew- or fry-pans, and coffee drank out of the tin dipper in which it was boiled on the coals of the campfire, has a flavor all its own. But last night the company cooks got into action again and served out boiled corned beef, hardbread, and coffee. As it never rains but it pours, our sutler also got along and opened up shop.

Guard duty in this place is not what it was at Bladensburg. Our company goes on picket today down by the mouth of the creek we are camped on [Nanjamoy,] to watch the rebels over across the river. Mail will leave here three times a week.

Yesterday the rebel batteries were busy throwing shells over to this side of the river, but our regiment was far out of range of fire. Before we came down here the rebels used to come over and visit and forage and gather recruits and scout around with impunity.

The infantry of this divison consists of our own brigade—the First and Eleventh Massachusetts, Twenty-sixth Pennsylvania, and the Second—and General Sickles' "Excelsior Brigade" of five New York regiments. The regiments are strung along for a distance of probably seven or eight miles, we being the farthest south.

XXVIII

Camp Second N. H. Regiment,
Near Budd's Ferry, Md., *Nov. 10, 1861.*

WHEN I wrote you last we were camped in a hollow by Nanjamoy Creek. Well, we got driven out. It was so infernally uncomfortable that Col. Marston moved the camp up onto the hill. It is not probable that we shall stay in this camp a very

great while, but when or where we will move is a riddle. For all that, we are doing a good deal of fixing up that belongs to a permanent camp. Have built log huts for the company cooks, which will probably be labor thrown away. But we are having a good time. The woods are full of small game, although we do practically no hunting. But the darkies bring in coons, possums, gray squirrels, rabbits and chickens, all cooked, and well cooked. We have not seen any soft bread since we left Washington. Our *hard* bread certainly does not belie its name. But given a good soaking in coffee, and well lubricated with butter, I manage to dispose of my share.

Our mail is regular in nothing but its irregularity. A three days' mail for this regiment got as far as the Massachusetts First, and then, in some fool freak, was shipped back to Washington. Everybody is swearing—except, possibly, the chaplain.

XXIX

Camp Baker,
Near Budd's Ferry, Md., *Nov. 10, 1861.*

SINCE my last letter we have moved up several miles and are now encamped with the rest of our brigade, near General Hooker's headquarters. Our location here is a most attractive one, the camp being in the edge of woods thick enough to afford a perfect wind-break. This insures us against such a calamity as we were up against at wind-swept Hill Top, when several tents were overturned.

Yesterday I had a reserved seat at a first-class show. I heard the rebel batteries on the other side of the Potomac banging away at something, so I went down to the river—not a very great distance—to find out what the trouble was. It was a saucy little schooner skimming down the river, and the rebels trying to hit her. They fired about sixty shots and never made a score. But it was an inspiring sight all the same, the big guns flashing from battery after battery as the vessel came in range, and puffs of smoke in the air or a big splash on the water marking the grand finish.

It looks very much as though we were going into winter quarters here. Logs of suitable size and length are being hauled in,

to be used as an underpinning for our canvas houses, and the boys, in squads of five or six, are already at work on their quarters. My crew is already made up, a picked squad of congenial souls, and we will get at our building operations next week.

We had a thunder shower night before last, and it has cleared off very cold. But there is an abundance of fuel, and half a dozen campfires agoing in each company street.

XXX

Camp Second N. H. Regiment,
Chickamoxen, Md., *Nov. 27, 1861.*

FOR amateurs, the association of house builders I joined has done a good job. It is on the same general plan as most of the others. First, you start in to build a log cabin. When the walls are four or five feet high, you stop, fasten your tent on top—and there you are. It is astonishing, the room you gain over a plain tent. On the right-hand corner fronting the street is a fireplace—a big one—built, with its chimney, of small logs laid cob-house fashion and thickly plastered with Maryland mud. The bottom is sunk a foot or more, and around the front is a one-log pen or barrier, which serves a double purpose. It is just right for a seat before the fire, and it keeps our thick carpet of straw out of mischief. When we are all fixed up we'll have bunks and a table and shelves and pegs and a gun rack and everything required in a well-regulated family. I am writing by the light of a candle. Roberts [Orsino,] one of the tent's crew, is warming himself at the fire and going over all the songs he has in stock, and the rest of the gang seem to have no higher ambition, just at present, than to "break up" both me and him.

Sunday our company went up to "the landing" to help unload two or three small steamers that bring our supplies down from Washington. The landing is at Rum Point, over three miles from here, but as near as boats can get to us, on account of the rebel batteries. As we did not start to return until after dark, we had a sweet time of it. The roads here are now nothing but a ditch through woods and fields, filled with mud of terrible adhesive qualities and of fabulous depth. I thought, for the life of me, I should never get home.

If I tried to follow the road, I wallowed up to my knees in mud. If I switched off to one side or the other, I had, in addition to the mud, a butting match with every tree in the county. It was pitch dark when I landed in camp just ahead of a smart shower.

Tomorrow is Thanksgiving Day in New Hampshire, and we New Hampshire boys out here on the Potomac will observe it in a befitting manner. In our tent we have a big fat goose up on the shelf, with a rabbit- or chicken-pie or two and a few other fixings. Beat that if you can.

XXXI

Camp Baker,
Chickamoxen, Md., *Dec. 1, 1861.*

I AM just in from our standard show—a little schooner running up the river and thumbing her nose at the rebel batteries. In all, they fired seventy shots at her, with the usual result—no damage done. There was much noise and smoke, a great splashing of the water, and lots of fun for the boys in the gallery. As every shot they fire costs them from ten to fifteen dollars, each schooner trip up or down the river must be an expensive job for them. They must burn up about a thousand good dollars every time, mainly to amuse a lot of Yankee soldiers over on the Maryland shore.

Next Tuesday there is to be a grand review of this division, together with an inspection. These functions are doubtless a military necessity, but not very popular with the men—especially the inspections. You are toled out with your entire outfit, and everything is hauled over, peeked into and examined. They say Gen. McDowell, the old fellow who led us to Bull Run (and back,) is down at headquarters. The last time I saw him he was riding down the front of Burnsides' brigade, in the corn field at Bull Run, and telling us we had won a victory.

There are a thousand-and-one rumors afloat as to our leaving here, but I am not expecting to move in any other direction than straight across the river. Any man with a vivid imagination can make a guess, whisper it to one or two, and before night it is all over camp as an authentic tip from headquarters. Gen. Heintzelman's division is advanced on the other side almost down to the

rebel position, and my guess is that he will come down on them before long, while we will cross here and give them Jessie, with the aid of the gunboats. They are getting ready for us. We can see them digging and throwing up intrenchments on the opposite hills

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XXXII

Camp Baker,
Chickamoxen, Md., *Dec. 8, 1861.*

TOMORROW rounds out just seven months of my three years' term. The other night, at the meeting of a literary society some of the First Massachusetts boys have started, the Lieutenant-Colonel of the regiment said he thought the regiment would be home by March. There's the cheerful optimist for you! Our regiment has been in the service just about the same length of time as the First, and the two will probably be sent home about the same time. Presumably the regiments first in the field will go out first, and so we may get home many months before the later regiments from New Hampshire. They will have to keep them as a sort of police for a while after the war is really over.

For a day or two we have been having splendid weather. But under foot it is simply awful. The "Maryland salve" is everywhere. The roads are a terror now, and in a short time will be absolutely impassible except where corduroyed with logs laid crossways to make some sort of a platform for teams.

We were reinforced last week by a brigade of New Jersey troops. Just below the blockade is a large fleet of gunboats, ready to co-operate in any move we may make. Last night a big steamer ran the blockade in the darkness and there was a terrific hullaballoo.

Joe Hubbard has got back from New Hampshire, but the boxes confided to him have not yet arrived. He says there is one for me, and I am, of course, very anxious to get it.

XXXIII

Camp Beaufort,
Near Budd's Ferry, Md., *Dec. 15, 1861.*

I WISH you could take a peek-in on my luxurious surroundings. I have a barber's chair to sit in. It has a canvas back and seat, and was built by Damon [George B.,] the Jack-at-all-trades of my tent's party. There is a good fire, plenty of apples at my elbow, and, all in all, I am a pampered child of luxury. There are only two besides myself occupying the castle just at present—George Slade and George Damon—very companionable fellows, and who have seen a great deal of the world. Two—George Cilley and Bill Wilber—are in the hospital, and E. Norman Gunnison (a fellow with a decided talent for writing poetry) is in the guard house for some infraction of camp discipline. So we three that are left have plenty of room and get along mighty comfortably. Slade and Damon are good cooks. We buy flour, butter, sugar, &c., and cook a big stack of fritters whenever the spirit moves us. And we have rabbits, chickens, wheat biscuits, and various other camp luxuries. And occasionally we make molasses candy of an evening. All this, you will understand, is outside of and in addition to our regular army rations.

Here is our schedule of duty: Reveille beats at sunrise, when we turn out and answer to roll call. Then comes the breakfast call. At 9 o'clock is guard mount—that is, the company which has been on guard duty is relieved by another. The remaining companies drill from 9 to 11 and 3 to 5—but now only occasionally, owing to weather conditions. Dinner call at 12. Dress parade at sunset. Tattoo is beat at 8, when the roll is called and the men can go to bed. The Colonel says we will not have much drilling for the rest of the winter.

The boys find plenty to amuse themselves with, and things are by no means dull here in camp. Quite a number of musical instruments have found their way in, and there are men here who know how to play them too—fiddles and banjos and such.

We had a large party of New Hampshire people in camp today—E. H. Rollins, John P. Hale, Daniel Clark, Waterman Smith, E. A. Straw and others. There were also four good-looking New Hampshire women, and they got three rousing cheers at dress parade.

The old rumor factory now has it that the Second is going to Washington within a few days, to act as provost guard. Joe Hubbard's boxes have not yet arrived, and may not for some time yet. The railroads leading into Washington are buried in freight and express matter, but I suppose our stuff will get through in due time.

You inquire what sort of a place this is. Well, it comes about as near to being no place at all as it could and still be on the map. There are but few houses hereabouts, and a good part of these are just negro cabins. There is a store a little ways from here, but I have yet to discover where enough local trade can come from to keep it going. The Potomac is only about an eighth of a mile from our camp. From the western edge of the strip of woods in which we are camped one can see the river for a long distance, with the rebel batteries, and the upper works of their gunboat "George Paige," which sticks close up in Quantico Creek, out of reach of our gunboats. The river here is less than two miles wide and the deep-water channel runs very near the other side, so a large vessel has to run close in to the rebel batteries to get through at all.

We witnessed a lively little brush the other day. The rebels started to throw up some works on Shipping Point, and the "Harriet Lane" and five other gunboats dropped down and told them to stop it. The way they pitched shells onto that point was a caution. And a few nights ago—just for fun, as near as I could figure it out—one of our gunboats dropped down to the upper battery and had some sport for a while. I always did like fireworks, so I got the countersign and went out to take in the display. It was worth the money.

You have thought to inquire for "Heenan." Alas! Poor Heenan! It grieves me to inform you that the other night he got into an argument with a Company D boy. Just what condition the other fellow was left in—if still alive—I don't know. But when Heenan returned to the bosom of his family he was a sight. His face was badly bruised, both eyes in mourning, and one thumb chewed to a jelly. He says he wanted his thumbs to be mates, and the other was crushed out of shape before he left Portsmouth.

XXXIV

Camp Beaufort, *Dec. 22, 1861.*

OUR friends over the river have got another battery in good working order. It mounts a 64-pounder rifled gun, and the other night they dropped two shells within the camp limits of the New Jersey brigade, forty or fifty rods from our camp.

The boxes sent on by Joe Hubbard have at last arrived, and you may be sure we were glad to see them. I presume you know what was in mine as well as I do myself. The pies went into the common stock and disappeared as though they had legs. The various articles of clothing filled my knapsack as full as it would hold. And I must say to you that the little knitted smoking-cap or skating-cap or sleeping-cap, or whatever you call it, is the gayest fez in camp. There are quite a number in the company, built on the same general lines, but no two alike, and mine takes first premium. I wish I could see you long enough to thank you for it.

I took one of the big boxes and made a cupboard to keep my things in. I have my eating utensils on one shelf, writing materials, bundles of letters, &c., on another, papers, magazines and books on the third.

Col. Marston was wounded last Sunday by the accidental dischagre of a pistol, so Lieut.-Col. Fiske is in command. He is a great fellow for drilling the men, and we are not having as easy a time as we did with Marston.

One of the boys has just come in, bringing a fragment of a shell fired by the rebels at our battery down near the river. All the mementos I have picked up so far are a sand-bag from the rebel works at Fairfax Court House and a few insignificant trifles.

XXXV

Camp Beaufort, *Dec. 29 1861.*

I AM feeling pretty ragged just now, but I see a glimmer of comfort ahead in the shape of a big lot of biscuits Damon is making for supper. We have not had any rations of soft bread since we left Bladensburg, but better days are coming. They are putting in

a bakery for the Second Regiment, and when it is done I expect the boys will feel like getting up a celebration. Really, though, it won't make so much difference in this tent, where we have had a very efficient private bakery in operation for some time. Even I, as a lover of toast, have developed some skill in making good buttered toast out of our hardbread. I soak and boil it a long, long time, then stack the crackers up, buttering each, and it is a pretty palatable dish, if I do say it as shouldn't.

XXXVI

Camp Beaufort,
Charles County, Md., *Jan. 5, 1862.*

NIGHT before last we had a regular old-fashioned hail-storm. I lay on the ground in my tent, rolled up in my blankets and overcoat, cozy, snug and warm in spite of the hail that was hammering my canvas roof, and pitied the poor people who didn't have a fireplace, a snug nest, and a roof. But last night the boot was on the other leg. I was on guard, and it was miserably cold, with ice a quarter of inch thick over everything. When I came off, along in the night, I headed for my tent and comfort for a while. Had just got comfortably settled when some one stuck his head in and hollered, "*Your chimney 's on fire!*" I rolled out, broke through the ice in a water-hole, mixed some mud, and plastered it into the crevices. In about an hour, another good angel sang the same song, and I went through the same performance. Another hour, and the third alarm came. I was now thoroughly mad and utterly demoralized, and I howled back, "Well, let her burn if she wants to." It smouldered until morning, when we doctored it so we hope it will behave for a few days at least.

The rebels have not been very demonstrative lately. I hear that Gen. Hooker has orders not to grant any more furloughs, as Heintzelman is advancing on the other side and is liable to have a fight any day, in which event we will be called upon to support him. And besides this, Gunnison has had a dream. He believes in all sorts of uncanny manifestations, and the other night he dreamed that the regiment was in a battle, and in an awful hot place too. I am not

very anxious to get out of my present comfortable quarters, unless it might be to go home or farther south where it is warmer. If it were not for that glorious old fireplace of ours we should not be as comfortable or as cheerful as we are.

XXXVII

Camp Beaufort,
Chickamoxen, Md., *Jan. 12, 1862.*

I HAVE been working like a beaver all day and am awfully tired. It was that infernal chimney. Last night it got afire again and was roaring gloriously before we found it out. So today the whole crew put in their time reconstructing it. It is a pretty substantial piece of work, and it ought to stand the wear and tear for a long time. This is one of the most enjoyable days of the season—warm and with a refreshing breeze. But O, the mud! And not a bit of snow on the ground.

Last night the rebels fired a great many random shots across the river, hit or miss, here and there, and have been keeping at it, intermittently, today. They know, of course, the location of our camps, and it is really surprising that not a speck of damage has been done. A number of the shells struck quite near to our camp. Today one shell struck square in the New Jersey camp, but did not explode. And this afternoon, while I was sitting in my tent half asleep, there was a wild screech a few feet overhead, and a shell landed on the parade ground a few rods beyond the camp, but did not explode. A crowd ran out from the camp, but Damon captured the prize and brought it into our tent. A little while after, he sold it for ten dollars. [Major Stevens was the purchaser. For several years, properly labeled, it was one of the exhibits in the Adjutant-General's office at Concord.]

You inquire of me why we don't fight. I don't know. Suppose the time hasn't come yet. I have no doubt it will before long, however, and there will be a lively time.

XXXVIII

Camp Beaufort,
Charles Co., Md., *Jan. 19, 1862.*

HORRIBLE weather! It is almost inconceivably muddy, and today it is raining. I went out to watch the batteries work, today, and it was a question sometimes whether a would n't have to leave my boots in the mud. We have spells of cold weather, with a little snow, but it soon gets warm and rains.

Jim Carr, of our company, cut his foot terribly with an axe, yesterday. The blade went right through the bones, and he will be crippled for a long time.

I have studied it out that we will not trouble the rebels on the other side for some time yet. We are building big mortar rafts up at Baltimore, to be used in shelling out the rebel batteries. It will take some time to get them ready, of course; but when the time does come there will be music in the air.

Last week I helped dig out a rebel shell. It was buried seven feet in the solid earth and must have traveled over four miles.

XXXIX

Camp Beaufort,
Charles Co., Md., *Jan. 26, 1862.*

YOU never saw a lovelier day than this—clear as a whistle, with breeze enough to set the whitecaps running on the river. In the forenoon I went down to our battery, near the river, just for the walk. One of the lookout pickets I passed on the bluff had a powerful spy-glass, through which I got a good view of the rebel fort on Shipping Point. Down by the battery I picked up an Indian arrow head. Some contrast between this stone weapon of a dead and gone race and those long 32-pounders close by.

I see a good many old Manchester acquaintances here who drop down sightseeing. Kimball the shoe man, John B. Chase the tanner, and Cy. Mason, Washington agent for the Associated Press, were here day before yesterday; and yesterday Dr. Hawkes came down.

Would you like a picture of myself and my surroundings right at

this moment? Well, here it is. See me sitting in front of a cheerful wood fire, my boots off, and your gorgeous smoking cap on my head. By my side, a cup of steaming hot cocoa, a cookie and a quarter of mince pie. Slade is at my right, writing, and similarly provided for in the eatable line. Just at this moment he is digging down into his box hunting for a big lump of candy that came to him from home.

We had chickens, from New Hampshire, for supper. I am getting to be an expert, myself, in certain branches of cookery. I can toss and turn fritters now, without dropping them in the ashes. Can you? Our "oven" is very simple, but it does its work to perfection. We set a deep iron pan on a bed of coals. In this, four or five little rocks as supports for the plate carrying the dough. The whole covered with another iron pan filled with coals. The biscuits and plum cake we turn out cannot be beat anywhere by anybody.

XL

Camp Beaufort,
Charles Co., Md., *Feb. 1, 1862.*

EVERY night, almost, I dream that I am home again, and those dreams are perhaps a forerunner or premonition of something that is going to happen. The signs are decidedly more promising for an early termination of the war. We have worsted the rebels in every fight we have had for some time, and the tone of the Southern press indicates that the Southern people begin to appreciate what a scrape they have gotten themselves into. I expect we will move from here before long. The Quartermaster says he does not expect to stay in this place much longer, and has especially charged his teamsters to keep their equipments in condition for a quick movement. Besides, a road is now being built down to Liverpool Point, about twelve miles below here on the Potomac. This indicates that when we go we will *embark* for somewhere—perhaps only to be ferried across the river.

In all your life, travels and experience you never ran across such a mudhole as this is at this season. I heard, this afternoon, that we would have to back our supplies up from the landing, as it is pretty near impossible for teams to get through. The landing is two miles

CAMP SULLIVAN, WASHINGTON

and a half from here, and we would have a fine time toting up boxes of hardbread, beef, and other fixings. I saw one of our boys coming up from the landing last night who had evidently misjudged the depth of the mud in some place, for clear to his waist he was cased in Maryland salve. A man is fortunate if he can find a place to cross the road without going in to his knees.

My tentmate Damon is on furlough. He was not in condition for duty, having strained his back, so they gave him a furlough of thirty days. His time is about half up, and we do miss the boy. Frank Robinson has got back, looking pleasant and happy, as a newly-married man should.

XLI

Camp Beaufort,
Charles Co., Md., *Feb. 9, 1862.*

FOR a day or two I have been laid up with a bad cut on my foot, which I got chopping wood for my tent. I can not get a boot or a shoe on, but hope it won't bother me a great while. I guess—in fact almost know—that we are to leave here soon. Gen. Hooker has been to Washington to confer with the commanding General. Rahn, our Commissary Sergeant, thinks we are going on an expedition to Galveston, Texas. Wouldn't we have a time down there among those Spaniards, Greasers, Negroes, and those perfectly *awful* Texas Rangers!

Damon has not got back yet. We have a letter from him saying he was at Lunenburg, Vt., laid up with a lame leg.

We have been rigged out with new uniforms. Dark blue dress coats with light blue cord trimmings, and light blue pants.

XLII

Camp Beaufort,
Charles Co., Md., *Feb. 16, 1862.*

OF course you have rejoiced over Burnsides' victory at Roanoke Island and the success of the Kentucky army at Fort Henry. If we can keep on with the good work, this rebellion will be crushed and we home again before long. We are under orders

to be ready to march at short notice and will soon be doing our share of the business. A Vermont brigade is expected here, any day, to reinforce us; and some big guns are being brought down from Washington, probably to be used in shelling the rebel batteries. The gunboats have not had their full armament until lately.

That foot of mine, that I was fool enough to cut over a week ago, is a beauty now. I got cold in it, or something, and it now looks more like a parboiled pig than a foot. If we get orders to march right now, I shall have the foot swathed up in some way and go with the regiment.

Slade is sorting over his stuff, to see what he shall send home. He actually has more than he can lift.

A few days ago there came an order to find out how many men in this division wanted to go on the Mississippi river gunboat flotilla. They proposed to transfer forty out of each regiment, and I suppose the idea was that they would find lots of sailors in the regiments from the coast. The order was quickly rescinded, however.

XLIII

Camp Beaufort,
Chickamoxen, Md., *Feb. 23, 1862.*

MY foot is most well now, much to my gratification. I would not like a furlough just now. There will be some fighting before long and I want to be in it. The rebels over the way have not fired a gun for a week, and it is surmised that they have evacuated. Everything indicates that we will move soon—very soon. A Brigadier General has been assigned to command of this brigade, Col. Marston is coming back from Washington, and the officers on recruiting service in New Hampshire have been ordered back to the regiment. The Quartermaster assures me we will be off within a few days.

XLIV

Camp Beaufort,
Charles County, Md., *March 2, 1862.*

VERY cold just now, and the mud is drying up fast, so it is getting to be very good traveling. You know we are going to move when the roads are in condition. McClellan says so, and he ought to know. All the signs point to a movement before long. We have shipped the company property to Washington, and also our dress coats. We will not take any tents, and only two wagons, for ammunition. We drill now about six hours a day. The musicians have an "ambulance drill"—learning to get men into and out of ambulances, to staunch wounds, and to generally care for wounded men. Senator Hale told one of our boys, a while ago, that he thought we would be home by July.

Damon got back today, and we celebrated his return by cooking and eating two or three pounds of molasses candy. I got one valentine, and I know who *backed* it. Perhaps Sally [Shepherd] does too. It's nearly midnight, and I'm off to bed.

XLV

Camp Beaufort,
Charles Co., Md., *March 7, 1862.*

A "SIGNAL CORPS" of some one hundred men is now attached to this division. The signaling is done by means of flags. Yesterday a balloon went up over here, the observers signaling with one over Heintzelman's division, miles away on the other side of the river. The rebel batteries have opened up on something in the most furious manner. Every gun appears to be working full blast, and the heavy explosions fairly shake the canvas of the tent. [This was one of the preliminaries of the evacuation, which was completed on the 9th.]

Our new Brigadier General [Henry M. Naglee] has got himself universally hated, right off quick. All sorts of stories are going. Here is one, for what it is worth: He had an altercation with Gen. Sickles and pulled his revolver, with a threat to shoot. But when Sickles coolly pulled out his gun and reminded Naglee that he had shot his man before, the latter subsided. I guess there is no ques-

tion but that he especially and particularly dislikes the Second New Hampshire and First Massachusetts. It is stated that he tried to get them transferred from his brigade, but Hooker wouldn't allow it.

XLVI

Camp Beaufort,
Charles Co., Md., *March 16, 1862.*

GOT your letter, with picture, on Friday morning. I placed the picture on one of my shelves, and when Gunnison came in Damon picked it up and asked him if he had ever seen the picture of his youngest sister. "Gunny" told him no, and when he looked at the picture said, "O, well, you can't fool me; that's the girl Mart Haynes travels with when he's home." But Damon actually made him believe it was his sister. "Well," said Norman as he held your two pictures up for comparison, "they look enough alike to be twins. If Mart should see the two together he wouldn't know which one to hitch onto."

You have, of course, heard that the rebels evacuated their positions last Sunday. They burned everything they could not take away—camps and houses, their gunboat "George Page" and various smaller craft that had taken refuge with her up Quantico Creek. It was a wild scene as viewed from this side. For miles it was an ocean of smoke and flame. They left eighteen or twenty big guns, with other property that could not be burned.

How this will affect our movements is the problem now. The old rumor factory is working overtime, and one man's guess is as good as another's. The story that appears to find most favor is that we are going to New Mexico, where troops are much needed just now. Another wise man has it that we are going down to reinforce Burnside. Sickles' brigade is actually on board steamers now, ready to be transported somewhere.

The frogs are "peeping" now in every brook and mudhole. Damon shakes his head wisely, and says if we could only stay here till they get a little bigger and fatter, we'd live on frogs' legs. For dinner today Slade, Damon, Haynes & Gunnison had a great pile of fried oysters.

XLVII

Camp Beaufort,
Charles County, Md., *March 23, 1862.*

NOT a mail has reached us since last Monday. The Government has chartered all the boats within reach for troop transports, and none can be spared for side shows. Two expeditions have passed here this week. Yesterday about thirty large steamers went down the river. These fleets carried parts of Heintzelman's corps, and have probably gone down below Acquia Creek and landed. We are now a part of this corps, and will probably be the next to move—as soon as the steamers can go back to Washington and coal up.

We will have to make pack-horses of ourselves when we do go. Are to carry sixty extra rounds of ammunition in our knapsacks, and will be equipped with some new-fangled French tent. This tent is in four pieces, each man to carry a piece, and when put up it only makes a screen from the dew and the sun, being open at both ends.

I talked yesterday with a contraband who ran away from the rebels over in Virginia. He says they are fortifying at Fredericksburg, a place about twenty miles from Acquia and about thirty from here. Very likely that is where we will first run into them; and it will probably be a hard place to take, as they have a great many guns in position there and a large force of soldiers.

James O. Adams was here a few days ago. We had a good time together that evening.

Now comes the best joke of the season. Gen. Naglee is very unpopular—thoroughly hated by everybody from highest to lowest. I said so frankly in a letter which Farnsworth published. Then Halifax broke loose. I don't know how the matter ever got before the War Department at Washington—but it did. And the first thing Farnsworth knew he got a communication from Washington that scared him stiff. He showed it to my folks, and I guess they went wild—expected me to be taken out at sunrise and shot for high treason. The first intimation I got was in a hysterical letter from my mother, that I could hardly understand. Then in a day or two John Kenney came down from the hospital and said Harriet Dame wanted to shake hands with the private soldier that the War Department had to sit up and take notice of. Showing that headquarters

here had some orders in relation to me. I don't know what was in either of the communications, but the folks at home need have no fear of anybody in Hooker's division being very severely disciplined for voicing the universal sentiment in regard to General Naglee.

9 o'clock in the Evening.—You will not hear from me again for some time, probably, as it is given out that the advancing troops shall not write home. The Chaplain says the 9 o'clock mail tomorrow will be the last one out of here. I have eight letters to write to night, closing up my correspondence for the present.

XLVIII

Camp Beaufort,
Charles Co., Md., *April 3, 1862.*

I HAVE just learned, late at night, that a mail is going out tomorrow morning. It is getting to be very exasperating—these orders to leave, and then having them countermanded. We expected to get off today, and now the announcement is that we are certainly going tomorrow. The transports have been ordered, and temporary piers built to load us from. Captain Bailey has just got along with a batch of recruits. Don't know yet how many acquaintances I have in the lot.

One of Company E's men [Luther W. Fassett] was shot by rebel scouts yesterday, on the other side of the river. The company was over there digging up a big gun which the rebels had buried. He was sent back for some shovels, when three rebels stepped into the road and shot him. He had a brother in the same company and a wife and child in New Hampshire.

XLIX

In Camp Before Yorktown, Va.,
Monday, April 14, 1862.

A MAIL is going out, I am told, at three o'clock, and it is nearly that time now. We left our old camp, with all its really delightful associations, the day after I last wrote you, and were

on the steamer two days and two nights before she cast off from the pier. When we got to Point Lookout, at the mouth of the river, a wild gale was blowing, and it was not considered prudent to proceed down Chesapeake Bay, the "South America" being a crazy old river boat, and overloaded. So we ran in and tied up at the wharf, and almost everybody went ashore. It was a seaside summer resort, out of season, and we took possession. We made ourselves very comfortable in the cottages. There were good fireplaces and plenty of wood, and though it rained great guns, and the gale howled most of the time, we were dry and warm, and made ourselves very comfortable there for three days. But we came pretty near starving before a boat got down from Washington bringing us something to eat. The boys gave it a very appropriate name—"Camp Starvation."

When we got away we went straight to Fortress Monroe. We got there in the morning, just as the rebel ironclad "Merrimack" came out from Norfolk. The harbor was cleared of shipping in double-quick time, the "Monitor" and other war vessels moved up, and we thought there was going to be another big naval battle. But there wasn't; and the old "South America" pulled out and ran up to the York river.

There is now a tremendous army before Yorktown, as well as in it, and there will be a great battle. *We* have got the largest train of seige artillery ever brought together, and *they* have got some very strong forts and batteries. Our guns will be in position and open on the rebels before this letter reaches you. There is skirmishing every day. Berdan's sharpshooters are making themselves the terror of the rebels. They have some wonderful marksmen, and firing from little pits dug well out towards the rebel works, they make it mighty interesting for the rebel gunners. In some of the rebel batteries it is as much as a man's life is worth to attempt to load the guns. The instant he shows himself near the muzzle one of Berdan's men gets him. Some of them use telescope rifles. At some points the rebels put up planks to screen themselves while working the guns. I was a little acquainted with one of the Sharpshooters who was killed a few days ago—John Ide of Company E—a New Hampshire man from Claremont.

L

Camp Winfield Scott,
Near Yorktown, Va., *April 20, 1862.*

TODAY we received our first mail since leaving Camp Beaufort. We have moved up three miles nearer the rebel lines and are now doing our full share in the siege operations. We are working hard, building forts and trenches and roads, and should soon be able to qualify as experts with the pick and shovel. While our camp is probable a mile and a half from the rebel lines, our work is being done very much nearer, you can be sure. Yesterday and today we were out building roads. From where we were working we had a better view of the rebels than they did of us, and they didn't pay much attention to us until we were on our way back. We got a little careless then, I suppose, and the first thing we knew one big shell burst directly overhead, while another tore up the landscape not very far away.

Day before yesterday a lieutenant of the Engineer Corps was brought on a stretcher back by our camp, one arm torn off and otherwise mutilated. He was sitting on the ground, making a sketch, when a rebel shell burst almost in his lap.

We are having, really, a pretty hard time of it. We are turned out almost every night and held in line to repel anticipated attacks. [This was one of Gen. Naglee's fool stunts, that Hooker soon put a veto on.]

Our camp is on a big plain, gullied here and there by creeks. Near to us are the spots pointed out as the headquarters of Washington and Lafayette during the Revolutionary siege. I saw a little earthwork yesterday which was thrown up at that time, and a rusty iron cannon ball was dug up by the working party.

Our new four-piece ["shelter" or "dog"] tents have one great advantage—perfect ventilation. The tent's crew of four button their sections together, and have a roof to crawl under; but the house is wide open at both ends.

It was just one year ago tomorrow that our company was first sworn into the service. We hardly thought then that one year from that date would still find us 'way down South. So far as I am concerned, I am enjoying myself immensely. Was never in better spirits or in better health.

Wednesday, April 23.—At last I have another chance to write on my letter. I have been on duty every day for six days. Today I am on camp guard. Our siege guns are now almost all in position, and they will doubtless get to work pretty soon. Thousands of men are working day and night on the siege works and the roads. On this wing of the army we are building a road along the side of a creek leading up to the rear of our batteries. The roadbed is twenty-four feet wide, made by tumbling in one bank of the creek. As this is mostly on the side toward the rebel works, leaving the road under embankments from ten to twenty feet high, troops and supplies going up to the front will have almost perfect cover and protection.

There is a continual skirmish all along the line, and men are killed or wounded every day. The other night a large force of rebels made a sally upon six companies of the Third Vermont, but the Sixth regiment, with a section of artillery, came to their support, and the rebels were sent back home in a hurry. We lost about 45 men, including two captains; the rebels about the same number, including a colonel.

Day before yesterday I managed to work about as much discomfort into twenty-four hours as ever fell to my lot. We were working on the road. It rained all day, and I was, of course, thoroughly soaked. And when we got back to camp there was no warm, dry nest to crawl into. Instead, the rain poured through the tent in streams, and there was no way to get away from it. It has taken me till now to get back to anything like normal conditions.

I saw two deserters from the rebels, who came in this morning. One of them was from Pennsylvania. He was pressed into the rebel service and took the first opportunity to desert.

My old tent-crew of Camp Beaufort is broken. It is no longer a matter of choice and selection. We are counted off in fours and tent in the same order we stand in the ranks. My present mates are Bill Ramsdell, Lyn Woods and Joe Gleason—all royal good fellows.

LI

Camp Winfield Scott,
Before Yorktown, Va., *May 1, 1862.*

PHYSICALLY I am pretty near used up. Night and day we are on duty in the trenches or on fatigue work, supporting batteries, throwing up earthworks, building roads, regardless of weather conditions. Last night we were digging on a parallel, or trench for infantry, the end of which was at the edge of the bluff overlooking the York river. It was all open ground between us and the rebel works, and, though very dark, the rebels kept the scene fairly well lighted up. Every two or three minutes there would be a flash way up there to the front, then a roar, another flash in the air down our way, and pieces of iron flying. The big guns, though, did not worry us much. It was practically impossible to land a shell in the trench from one of these guns. But they had one big mortar working that was quite another matter. Every time this was fired the burning fuse marked its course. Up, up, up it would climb, then hang for an instant and come sweeping down, down, down. It did not land one shell in our trench, although it put some uncomfortably close.

I managed to steal one little nap, but it didn't last long. I got quite a comfortable seat at the end of the trench, overlooking the river. I have a recollection of watching the lights on vessels far down the river and in distant camps, and of listening to the lap of the waves on the beach below me. And I went to sleep. And I woke up—quick. I was trying to decide whether the rebels had sprung a mine or landed a shell in the trench, when it happened again, and I saw what the trouble was. Only a short distance below was the black mass of one of our gunboats, which had crawled up unusually close, and was firing her big shells right over our heads into the rebel works.

The rebels made an effort to drive in our pickets on a part of the line, this morning, but got rather more than they were looking for. A burial party has just gone by, to give a soldier's burial to a New Jersey boy killed in the affair. The cemetery, near our camp, is rapidly filling with the bodies of men who have been killed or have died of disease. Each grave is marked by a neatly-lettered headboard.

Company H of the Massachusetts First charged a lunette, or small outer earthwork, which had become a nuisance, the other morning, and drove the rebels out at the point of the bayonet. They had three men killed and a dozen or fifteen wounded. One of their men had a remarkable escape. A ball struck the eagle plate on his breast strap—a round brass plate backed with lead—doubling it up and going through just far enough to show the point at the back. The blow knocked him several feet, and he naturally thought, for a little time, that he was a goner.

That night we were in the trenches in support of the Hungarian battery. The rebels appeared to have a pretty accurate idea of its location, notwithstanding it was screened by trees, and sent shot and shell thick and fast. One shell struck on the parapet and rolled down under a platform on which six men were sleeping, but fortunately did not explode.

It rains or drizzles most of the time, so we are kept tolerably uncomfortable.

May 2d, afternoon, 2 o'clock.—The regiment went into the trenches to work today, but as I was not feeling well I remained in camp. The rebels have been doing more shooting today than any other day before, and many of their shot have struck near our camp. I went to sleep about noon, but was awakened by the infernal screech of a shell, and took it as a hint that I had better finish your letter. I do hope that May will prove a pleasanter month than April. I hope our batteries will open before long, for I want to see this affair closed up. If we thrash them soundly here and at Corinth, I think the war will be about as good as over.

LII

Williamsburg Battlefield, Va., *May 7.*

I AM all well—not hurt a bit. Not time to write any. Mail going right out by a private citizen. Go right up and tell my folks I am well. An awful battle. Harder than Bull Run. Mart.

[Written on an irregular scrap of brown paper.]

LIII

Near Williamsburg, Va., *May 8, 1862.*

HAVE just come in from a trip over the battlefield, and was fortunate enough to pick up the big sheet of paper on which I am writing this letter. I will commence at the beginning and tell you all about it.

On Sunday morning, as soon as it was discovered that the rebels had evacuated Yorktown, we were ordered to pack knapsacks and be ready to march immediately. We had no time to cook rations, and went for two days with only the fragments we happened to have in our haversacks. We marched up over the rebel intrenchments and through Yorktown. The rebel works were very strong and would have been a hard nut to crack. The rebels had planted torpedoes along the road, but none of our regiment were hurt by them. The road was in a horrible condition and badly crowded, and we did not get along very fast. It was nine or ten o'clock at night when we filed out into the woods by the side of the road and, with all our harness on, laid down for such rest as one could get under such conditions and in a drizzling rain. We were up at half-past four the next morning and soon on the road again, up through the woods. We had gone about a mile and a half when we came to a big slashing, where the trees over an area about twice as large as Merrimack Common had been felled, criss-cross, in every direction. Beyond this, a large open plain, with a line of small forts, one of which was directly facing the road up which we were advancing. Our regiment filed out and formed line to the right of the road, and the Massachusetts First upon the left. We threw out skirmishers and advanced up through the slashing. It was rough navigating in that network of prostrate trees and interlaced limbs and branches, as we had all our housekeeping outfits on our backs. My haversack got caught and was torn to pieces, but I made that good on the field the next day. We wormed our way ahead, up to the edge of the open field, and there halted for our artillery and the rest of the division to come up. We had a pretty lively time there, but nothing very fierce. The rebels had four or five field pieces in the fort and skirmishers scattered along the front in little pits. We distributed ourselves behind stumps and logs, and quite a number had a genuine earthwork, made by punching holes through a thick mass of

dirt that clung to the roots of an overturned tree. The cannon in the fort sent a solid shot, every little while, smashing and crashing down through the timber; but a number of our crack shots paid particular attention to those guns, while others devoted their talents to educating the rebels in those little picket holes. Perhaps half a dozen, selecting some particular hole, would lay with their sights covering the little mound of fresh dirt outside. The instant a head showed, there was trouble in that pit. They soon got enough of it, and for a long time the pits in front of the Second, for all we could see, might have been so many graves. All this time the rain was pouring, and we were fairly waterlogged. As business dragged, some of the men unfolded the little sections of tent and spread them over branches for a shelter. Others nursed up little fires and cooked a cup of coffee. Up to this time we had not had many men hit. Lieut. Burnham, of Manchester, was shot in the leg, and will, I am told, have to lose it. A man named Cole [Uriah W., of Co. H] was killed by a cannon ball.

At length our artillery came up and went into position in front of us. We lay supporting them an hour or two—and they were not having a very hot time of it. Then in the woods to our left, beyond the slashing, a tremendous fire of musketry broke loose. Volley followed volley, and after a while it was evident the firing was coming nearer, which meant that our troops in that part of the field were being driven back, and the rebels were gaining ground towards us. They came upon us through the slashing and along the edge of the field. I got in three or four shots across the road—which was better than most of our fellows could do—when the order was passed to fall back to the edge of the woods and re-form. This was no boys' play. Balancing on a log and looking for the best path, my cap went flying and the bark from a limb I was holding onto. I had no further doubts as to the proper course—a tunnel was safer than an overhead bridge, just then, and the rest of the way I kept as close to the ground as I could.

Once again out of the slashing and in line, we were ordered across the road, where the entire regiment was deployed as skirmishers through the woods some distance back from the slashing. Then we were ordered to sail in, and moving forward we were soon in as lively a mix-up as you could well imagine. The first squad of

rebels I ran onto I mistook for Eleventh Massachusetts men, there being a similarity of uniforms, and I was going right up to them, when Al. Simmons shouted, "Look out, Mart—those are rebels!" and fired. Quicker than you could say it, I was behind a big tree, and the ball had opened. It was a regular Indian fight, dodging through bushes and from tree to tree, sometimes forward and sometimes back. There were no end of personal encounters, and fights between squads and detachments, and all sorts of mixups, some ludicrous and some tragic. "Heenan" had his usual luck, coming out damaged but alive. He had a sudden and close collision with a rebel who came up out of somewhere like a jumping-jack. Nich. grabbed the reb's bayonet and pushed it one side just as the fellow fired. He says he intended to polish that fellow off with his fists, but two others jumped in, and things were going hard with Nich., when some of us saw his predicament and started for the rescue with a big whoop and empty guns. They faded into the background, however, and we didn't get one of them. Nich. is now nourishing a somewhat lacerated powder-stained hand.

One of the funny incidents was when Dave Steele, a lieutenant in Company G, made a dash into a squad of rebels, shouting, "Surrender, you d— cusses, or I'll blow you to Hell!" What he was going to do his "blowing" with—as he had no arms but his sword—is still a question; but the rebels took his word for it and dropped their guns.

Gardner [Orrin S.] of my company—said to be part Indian and who looks it—was peekabooed and pestered by a couple of rebs in the cover of an old rifle pit, until he got out of all patience, gave a wild Indian war-whoop, and closed in like an express train and put a stop to any further foolishness.

Toward the last of the fight, though, we had all we could do to keep from being run over. From the way they swarmed in on our front it was very evident the rebels were being heavily reinforced. We were in a pretty solid line now, with stragglers from other regiments mixed in. But we were getting short of cartridges. Hooker, plastered with mud from head to foot, rode along the line and told us to hold that line fifteen minutes longer. Back in the woods we heard a band strike up and play "Yankee Doodle." We were losing men rapidly. Captain Drown was killed and others killed or wound-

ed. Then our reserves came up, paddling through the mud as fast as they possibly could, and we all went in together and won out.

It was pretty near night when the fight was over and the regiment got together, counted noses, and bivouacked a little ways back, in the woods. We began to realize then that we were mighty hungry. But luck came my way. Lym. Dickey brought in a prisoner that he got the drop on. Lym. and I hitched up together that night, made the best shelter we could with our pieces of tent, and took our rebel friend into the mess. Lym. and I had oceans of sugar and coffee, and that was about all. Our guest had a corn pone and a quantity of excellent bacon, but no coffee. So we pooled our issues, had a most enjoyable supper, and snuggled in together for a fairly comfortable night. In the morning we shook hands with him, said good bye, and Dickey turned him over as a prisoner.

The day after the fight I went out over the whole battlefield, and a dreadful sight it was. In an old Revolutionary rifle pit close to the edge of the timber, where our last rush struck the main line, it was a ghastly sight. In one spot seven bodies lay, literally, in a heap. They were apparently cut off from rapid retreat by the barracade of felled trees. Up half-way through the slashing I came into a path, hardly wide enough to be called a roadway, which had been opened up for some purpose. In this regiments of the Excelsior brigade had made their fight and had suffered heavy losses. In some spots I could have walked a considerable distance upon dead bodies. I followed this path out into the woods at the left, where the Jerseys fought; and beyond them, dead rebels scattered about One of these had piled up a little cob-house screen of rails, which was about as much protection as a pasteboard box would have been. He was still there, prone on his breast, his gun thrust through between two rails, a finger on the trigger, and a little round hole in the top of his head.

The dead were lying in almost every conceivable position, sometimes absolutely grotesque if it were not so pitiful. Some apparently never changed the position of a muscle after they were struck—arms in position as if loading; some still clutching their piece in one hand and in the other the ramrod with the charge driven part way home. The rebels had some Indians in this fight—I saw at least two lying among the dead. The dead are not all buried yet, but

are being covered up as fast as the details can get to them. I have quite a number of bullets I picked up, and buttons from the uniforms of dead rebels.

We will move on from here as soon as supplies come up, and will probably have more fighting before we reach Richmond. It was awfully rainy the day of the battle, but is sunny and beautiful now. I have tried to give you some idea of what a time we had. I had just time to write you the briefest sort of a note Wednesday morning. Did you get it? I begin to feel now as though we should get through before many months, for I know we are going to thrash them out before long. |

LIV

Williamsburg, Va., *May 11, 1862.*

WE are now encamped on a large field just outside the city and close to William and Mary College. I have had a chance to look the city over a little, and find it a very homelike, cozy little burg. It is one of the oldest towns in the United States, with many nice buildings and ancient residences of the old Virginia gentry. The college is the oldest in America. Washington, Scott and many other famous men were educated here. On the college grounds is a rather badly-kept marble statue of Lord Berkley, one of the old colonial Governors of Virginia.

The women here are the most rabid of all secessionists—fairly venomons. Yesterday one of them, entirely unprovoked, hissed out to Gunnison, "You vile wretch!" "Gunny" kept thinking it over, and getting madder and madder, until today he stormed up to the house and demanded satisfaction of the head of the household. The old man regretted the unfortunate incident, and politely invited Gunnison to make the house his home while in town; and Gunnison came back to camp not quite determined whether he had won or lost.

Most of the public buildings here are being used as hospitals—full of wounded rebels. I suppose they enjoyed the parade of Yankees when our army passed through here—an almost uninterrupted stream of men for three days. The gayest sight was when a regiment

of 1600 lancers went by. The rebs left a few cannon here, and in some places quantities of shells which they evidently could not take along with them. They also planted torpedoes in places, and a number of men were blown up. Some were discovered before they were stepped on, and it is said General McClellan has ordered that rebel prisoners be set to work digging them up.

We are having glorious weather, clear and sunny, with the birds singing merrily. And it seems rather nice to be in a city again, with signs of civilization, albeit slightly ancient and mildewed. We are very comfortably quartered now. The rebels left great numbers of big tents [the old conical "Sibleys"] which we appropriated; and with only three or four in a tent we are very far from being crowded. Yesterday afternoon George Slade and I took a walk down to a little place about two miles from here, called Cottage Creek. It is a delightful bit of a place, where peace reigns in the midst of war. Three or four little cottages, a picturesque old mill, with an ancient bridge over the creek, make up as pretty a stage setting as one would see in many a day.

Beginning tomorrow, we will have to drill two hours a day as long as we stay here. The general impression is that we will not be here many days—not longer than until the prisoners are sent to some safer place. The rebs left most of their wounded in our hands, and they have the same care as our own. I had a talk with one of them who was at Bull Run, and it was very interesting to hear him tell of the battle as he saw it. He belongs to a Virginia regiment, and when the war broke out was living near Alexandria. He says he has been at his home since the war. It was lucky for him he was not caught, as his life might have been the forfeit as a spy.

One of our "missing" men, of Co. G, was found in the brush yesterday, where he had crawled out of the fight and died.

I hear that a lot of our men who were taken at Bull Run have been exchanged and are at Fortress Monroe. Won't we have a jubilee when they get back! [As a matter of fact, one at least of these prisoners—George C. Emerson of Company B—joined in season to to take part in the fight, and was killed.]

Gen. Grover, who has displaced Naglee as commander of this brigade, has been appointed Military Governor of this district. I would like to look this region over at my leisure, for a distance of a

dozen miles or so, it is so full of historic associations—Jamestown, Captain John Smith, Pocahontas, Powhattan, and various other distinguished residents of the long, long ago.

If it were not for home I think, on the whole, I should be quite well contented with army life. But I guess this affair will be settled up before long, and when sleighing-time comes in New Hampshire I will be there to help you enjoy it.

LV

Camp near Cumberland, Va.,
May 19, 1862.

JUST where we are camped now I cannot tell, except that it is in the woods, within four miles of the enemy and nineteen from Richmond. We left our camp at Williamsburg last Thursday morning and got in here this afternoon. This is a heathenish country, swarming with unpleasant neighbors other than rebels. Day before yesterday when I aroused from a wayside nap, one of the little snakes—common here, but harmless—slid out from under me. I gave a yelp and killed him as if he had been a rattlesnake.

I thought I wrote you at the time about Solon Porter. He died at Camp Beaufort, some time before we left there, of apoplexy. He was sitting on his bunk, cracking a nut between his teeth, when he fell back, unconscious, and lived but a short time. I was not tenting with him at the time. He was the third of my Camp Sullivan tentmates to die.

This ink is simply awful, and Gunnison, who is writing out of the same bottle, is expressing his opinion very freely. That sprig of geranium you sent me was a fragrant reminder of home. I will inclose a sprig of cedar from a tree just in front of my tent. When I can I gather a quantity of these cedar branches for a bed.

A dear little baby rabbit just came running into this tent and we caught him. The little rascal's confidence—if that was what led him here—was well placed. When I get through petting him I'll take him out into the woods and turn him loose in the safest place I can find.

LVI

White Oak Swamp, Va., *May 26, 1862.*

WE are camped now some ways beyond Bottom Bridge, across the Chickahominy. We have had a pretty strenuous time of it for the past week or two, a good part of the time wallowing through swamps, and our grub supplies very irregular and uncertain. I have had very little to eat besides hard crackers. My first move when I get "out of the wilderness" will be to get a good square meal with all the fixings. In getting to this point, we have, a good part of the time, been literally ploughing through swamp mud. Sometimes, where the road ran through a particularly bad morass, the road was built up and retained by logs along the side, upon which we picked our way after a fashion. But when one slipped or lost his balance it was a serious matter. And when we marched in the night-time it was a double terror. The night we arrived at Bottom Bridge, about midnight and dark as Egypt, I was absolutely cased in mud, and my gun as well, and I had to lie down as I was and wait for daylight to get down to the river for a cleanup.

We are now camped on a hill in the swamp [Poplar Hill,] in a nice clean field of clover. It is going to rain right away, but we have pitched our tent with extra care, have dug a good trench around it to carry the water off unless we have a flood. It rains very often, and the other day we had the fiercest hail storm I ever saw. The stones were very large and came down like cannon balls. I was out of camp and got behind a house, but was well pelted for all that.

When I read the new call for more troops I gave up all idea of a speedy return home. We expect a battle here before Richmond any day, but whether we will get into it or not depends on circumstances. Our camp strategists have got it figured out that we will be used to cut off the retreat of the rebel forces at Fort Darling.

LVII

Fair Oaks, near Richmond, Va.,
Sunday, June 15, 1862.

IT has been some time since I last wrote, and you are doubtless getting anxious. | We are now camped on the battlefield of Fair Oaks. We were not in the battle, but were in line, with skirmishers thrown out and batteries posted, waiting for the attack that never came and listening to the rattle of musketry off to our right. We did not come here until the second day after the fight. Before we started all our baggage was sent to the rear, and with my knapsack went my writing materials. We are having rough duty now. Every third day the entire regiment goes on picket duty for twenty-four hours, which means, as a rule, not even a cat-nap in that time. I was just settling myself for a good sleep today, when the cry went up that our knapsacks had come; so I sorted mine out from the heap and set to work to write some letters.

We arrived here about three o'clock in the afternoon and immediately went on duty for twenty-four hours. It rained all night—a steady downpour—and the whole country was flooded. Coming up, we waded for considerable distances through ponds from ankle to knee deep. Here it was just mud and water. The trenches we would have jumped into in case of an attack were half filled with water. Even if it had been permitted, there was no chance to lie down—no chance for much of anything but to stand up and take it through the long hours of the night. I did manage to get a few sticks of cordwood together and cobbled up a roost that gave two or three of us a sort of perch out of the mud. Directly in front of me lay a dead horse and a dead rebel. Within a short distance were perhaps a hundred dead horses—all killed when the rebels made their rush on our batteries on the first day. These have about all been cleaned up now, by burning, wood being piled upon them and great bonfires made.

The battlefield presented one of the most horrible sights imaginable. Many bodies of men killed in the later stages of the battle were still unburied. Some were in shallow graves, but as a rule burial consisted merely in covering the bodies as they lay. The heavy rains, washing away the covering, had left many gruesome sights. I was an advanced picket the other night, my position be-

ing in the midst of several dirt piles, with enough in sight to show that each covered a dead rebel. That day Eugene Hazewell accidentally shot himself through the foot and had to have a toe taken off. We were posted so near the rebels that we could hear them talk. We had orders not to shoot wantonly at their pickets, and we understood they had similar instructions; but if so they disregarded them and took a shot at a Yankee whenever they could draw a bead on one.

LVIII

Fair Oaks, near Richmond, Va.,
June 22, 1862.

HAVE been out with a work party all the forenoon, and go on picket at three in the afternoon, to remain twenty-four hours, and feel as if I was earning my salary. There can be no question but what we are putting in full time. We are virtually on duty every minute, for, even in camp, we are on the alert ready to turn out for a fight at any moment. Yesterday the rebels attempted to drive in our pickets, and the result was a very lively little skirmish, as our boys had not got quite ready to come in. A few days ago the Sixteenth Massachusetts made a reconnoisance, attacking the rebel pickets for the purpose of ascertaining their position and strength. It cost the Sixteenth four or five men killed and eighteen or twenty wounded. The Sixteenth has recently been attached to our brigade.

I am as well contented in the army as I could expect to be, but still look forward with pleasant anticipations to the time when I will be home again. I was talking with Frank Robinson today about the good times we would have in Manchester. [He was killed, two months later, at Bull Run.] I had a letter from a friend in Great Falls—one of my old school chums—and he had so much to say of the happy times in the old Manchester High School that I had to pinch myself to keep from getting homesick.

We are camped in a swamp, and yet water is one of the scarce articles. We have had no rain for several days, and the sun has dried up most of the surface water, so it is no easy matter to even fill our canteens.

LIX

Fair Oaks, near Richmond, Va.,
June 26, 1862.

SINCE I last wrote you I have been in two lively fights—one last Monday and the other yesterday. Monday afternoon our pickets were ordered to advance and drive the rebel pickets as far as they could. Company I happened to to be one of the companies on the advanced line, so in we went. It was a sneak-up, crawling through the thick swamp brush till we struck the rebel pickets. Jesse Dewey and I, crawling along together, had the luck to open the ball, and in one minute there was lively popping along a half-mile front. The rebels had no call to make a very stiff fight—and they didn't. Gen. Grover, mounted, with his upper works all that was visible above the bushes, directed the movements, and we rushed them back a long distance. Then their reserves came swarming in—and we got back. Our loss was very light. In Company I only one man wounded.

Yesterday the entire Division advanced over the same ground, and we had a mighty stiff fight [battle of Oak Grove.] We found the rebels in heavy force this time, and it was only after a hard and bloody fight that we drove them back over practically the same ground we had covered on Monday. Only one man was killed in my company—John Brown, a fat, hearty, round-faced, good-natured boy as ever lived. Company B had over twenty men killed or wounded out of forty-six that went into the fight. Gen. McClellan arrived on the field in the afternoon and complimented us very highly for our work during the day.

On James River,
Wednesday, July 2, 1861.

At last I have got a chance to finish my letter. Lots of things have happened since I commenced it. I have had no good rest for three days and two nights, so you can imagine the condition I am in. Sunday morning we marched away from Fair Oaks with three days' rations in our haversacks. The way property and supplies were destroyed didn't look good to us. The rebels followed closely, and a few miles back we went into line of battle, posted batteries, and were ready for them. There was a short and sharp fight a little ways to our right [Savage Station,] but we didn't get into it. The

rebels were repulsed, and we moved on again. Along in the night we got into bivouac in the dark, a great mass of troops, where we could see but little of our surroundings until daybreak. Then we soon studied it out that we were at a cross-roads, with an immense wagon train parked near by, and a heavy force to protect it. During the forenoon the troops were moved into position to meet any advance from the direction of Richmond. We were not attacked until the middle of the afternoon, and then a great battle was fought [Glendale or Charles City Cross Roads.] We whipped the rebels at every point. The Second Regiment was all over the field, generally in support of some battery or other regiment. We lost very few men. I was hit in the groin by a spent ball and crippled about as I would have been if a mule had kicked me. We were advancing up a slope, in line, to support a regiment that was breaking. I heard that bullet, and when it struck me it set me back out of the ranks and I thought I was shot through and through. I saw some of the boys look back sort of pityingly as the line went on. It did not take me long to find out that I was very far from being a dead man. There was a dent in my thick leather belt, but the bullet had not gone through. It had doubtless struck the ground and lost much of its force before it hit me. I was back in my place by the time the regiment reached the crest. But in a little while I was very lame, and it was only by great effort that I kept along with the regiment that day and the next.

That night and the next morning we moved on a few miles farther and took position on high ground not far from the James river. Here another great battle was fought [Malvern Hill.] The artillery firing was simply terrific, we having some of our gunboats in action. The rebels charged again and again, and were driven back every time with frightful losses. It was a terrible punishment we gave them. We were not actively engaged, and so lost no men.

I got in here this afternoon pretty well used up. It commenced to rain last night, the roads were in bad condition, and there were thousands upon thousands of stragglers. But aides were stationed to direct these as they poured out onto the flats, and the disorganization was quickly rectified. Don't know when I'll get a chance to send this. Go up and tell my folks.

LX

Camp near the James River,
Monday, July 8, 1862.

CAN write only a short letter now, and my old excuse will have to do duty again—"used up." We are fortifying our position, and as there is a good chance of Johnny paying us a visit most any time, we are putting the house in order to entertain him. We work night and day on our intrenchments. We are camped in an open field, on a gentle slope along the crest of which run our rifle pits and earthworks. The weather is frightfully hot, and as a consequence the men feel very shiftless and lazy. I do, anyway, and judge the rest by their actions. Quite a number of our boys were taken prisoners in the retreat. Perk. Lane is probably among the number, as he was one of the sick sent back to Savage Station, and they were nearly all taken.

Eddie Dakin, the Captain's waiter, is going home tomorrow, and I will intrust this letter to him, to be dropped in the Manchester or some other post office.

LXI

Camp near Harrison's Landing,
James River, Va., *July 11, 1862.*

RECEIVED a letter from you last night. I am writing under very unfavorable conditions, as it is a rainy day and mud and water reign supreme. Whenever it rains hard the water beats through the canvas like a fine seive. If the wind happens to blow it is pretty sure, in addition, to beat into one end or the other of the shelter. The prospect now is that we shall lay in our present position for some time and have considerable leisure. If we do you can expect a letter from me pretty often.

We are hard at work fortifying our lines. The camp of our regiment is immediately to the rear of a redoubt where twenty or thirty cannon will be mounted. Two eight-inch howitzers are now in position. We are building rifle pits from the right of this redoubt down to a pond [Rowland's mill pond.] When you know that our intrenchments form a line several miles in length, you will get some

BILL RAMSDELL

idea of the magnitude of our works. This is a very interesting locality, plastered all over with historic associations. President Wm. Henry Harrison was born near here, and down by the river there is a stately mansion built long before the Revolution of bricks brought from England. In the family burying ground I saw stones dating back over two hundred years.

LXII

Camp near Harrison's Landing, Va.,
July 19, 1862.

ROD. MANNING, my present tentmate, and I got tired of lying in the mud, so we sallied over to where they were tearing down a house, about three-quarters of a mile from here, and managed to gather in a quantity of the old clapboards. With these spread on a framework of poles, we have a bunk or platform high enough to keep us out of the water when it rains, and making a very fair seat when, for instance, I want to write a letter to you. This is not the only public improvement. We have built a bough arbor over the front of our tent to give some shade from the scorching sun, and are thinking of a bough screen at the back end of the tent to keep out the wind and rain.

Our rifle pits are finished, so we will have no duty except guard duty and a short drill each day. I hope the North will send reinforcements on quickly, for I want to see our army advance again on Richmond and end the war. This is a good place to rest in for a few weeks, where we can have our supplies landed at our very door from transports.

In the retreat from Fair Oaks our company lost ten men taken prisoners. We have a pitifully short line now, compared with what it was when we left Manchester.

LXIII

Camp near Harrison's Landing, Va.,
July 23, 1862.

BY the papers I see that a hospital is to be established in New Hampshire for the care of sick and wounded soldiers from our state. That is all very nice, but, as much as I would like to see home, I hope I will never have any use for that establishment. I have been out today to a review by Gen. McClellan and am pretty well fagged out. Now I will try to answer some of your questions. There are not many houses about here—it's right out in the country. Such houses as there are are mostly occupied as hospitals. Those outside our lines that would interfere with the range of our guns have been torn down. Notwithstanding the ravages of war, it is a most beautiful region. The busy place now is down at the landing, where the negroes are kept busy unloading supplies from the transports. Our food, for a few days, has not been quite up to the New Hampshire standard. Our meat has been "smoked sides"—a very poor quality of bacon. I have almost forgotten how a real first-class meal does taste.

"Those curls?" Well, I came to the conclusion, yesterday, that inasmuch as I had lost my comb and didn't know where I could get another, heroic measures were necessary. So I hunted up a camp barber and had my hair cut and my head shaved, sandpapered and varnished. I was looking at the little round picture yesterday, and a little end of black hair that straggled out between the case and the picture reminded me that you placed it there the night I told you I had enlisted. It was braided and tied just as you tied it that evening. We had but little idea then that I was to be so long away.

Thursday, July 24.

It is about three o'clock in the afternoon, and I have just finished my dinner. I looked over the miserable piece of miserable bacon that the company cook handed out to me, and then started off into the wilderness, and when I came back I had gathered in a pint of blackberries, which helped out very materially.

General McClellan was around today looking over the intrenchments. One of his staff had quite a little misadventure down by the pond, where a lot of us were having a swim. A small canal, or sluice, runs out of this pond, which is crossed by a frail plank bridge.

The General and staff were crossing this bridge, when a plank gave way and down into the ditch went one horse and rider. The officer managed to crawl out—and a very draggled specimen he was—but it took the united efforts of the whole party to get that horse onto terra firma.

I received a letter from Roger [Woodbury] yesterday. He was of opinion that the Third Regiment would come up to the Peninsula, as troops were being sent from that Department to reinforce McClellan. I saw Hen. [W. H. D.] Cochrane yesterday, and he told me the Third and Fourth were actually embarked for here.

Saturday, July 26.

Yesterday morning the Second Regiment went out on picket and got in at noon today. I had the most enjoyable picket tour in all my experience. We were out about two miles from camp, and as there were cavalry vedettes and patrols still farther out, we had no fears of a surprise attack. There were so many of us that no man had to stand a post more than one one-hour turn. The rest of the time we were at liberty to roam, pick blackberries and gather green apples and have a good time generally. No camp ever had a more perfect picket protection than was given by that swarm of foragers and sight-seeing scouts. Close to headquarters was a house—a well-shaded, cozy southern home. The owner and his two sons are in the rebel army, but his wife and daughter remain and have a safeguard of our soldiers. And you never saw such a swarm of little negroes as there was about that place.

Today has been feast day—the greatest dinner within the memory of man—a genuine "biled dish"—potatoes, beets, onions, cabbage and boiled salt pork. And just now Rod. Manning is frying some apples that are going to make a pretty good dish, if I can judge by the smell.

Sunday, July 27.

Hen. Everett has just been over here, and we had a good long chat about times in the old printing office in Manchester. The sun is coming up in a way that promises a hot day—and a hot day down here *is* hot.

LXIV

Camp near Harrison's Landing, Va.,
August 3, 1862.

OUR Division went out, last night, on a reconnoissance most up to Malvern Hill, where the last great battle was fought on the retreat. We went on through woods, over stumps, wading brooks and bog holes, until we were pretty near the enemy's lines, when Gen. Hooker learned that Kearney had accomplished what we had set out to do, and we about-faced and blundered back to camp through the darkness. It was almost three o'clock when we got back, and I was tired through and through. [The expedition was really misled by a guide.]

There has been some little stir here for a few days in relation to transfers to the gunboats, as twenty-five or thirty seamen are wanted from each regiment. Those who have been to sea and want to go again have passed in their names, but we do not know as yet who, if any, have been accepted. Gunnison sent in his with the rest.

The company cooks are preparing a great dinner—soup, with potatoes, onions and cabbages in it. It certainly is a feast to men who have learned not to be surprised if they get nothing but hard bread, or even nothing at all. I have just heard that we are to go out tonight on another reconnoissance. I hope not. I had much rather lie comfortably in my tent than go on any such tramp as we had last night.

LXV

Camp near Harrison's Landing, Va.,
August 8, 1862.

SINCE I last wrote we have been on quite a little expedition to Malvern Hill and back. We left our camp Monday afternoon, just before sunset. It was a beautiful evening, and as we followed a fairly good road we trudged along very comfortably until about midnight, when we halted and slept on our arms until daybreak. Bright and early we resumed our march. The enemy's cavalry pickets were struck within a few hundred yards and our cavalry sent them flying, after the exchange of a few shots. When we

came out into a large field I saw that we were on the ground where we fought on the second day of the retreat from Fair Oaks—[at Charles City Cross Roads.] Then we swung to the left and pushed down the road to Malvern Hill—the same we had followed once before. When we came out into the great open area around Malvern Hill, one of our light batteries was already engaged with a rebel battery of four pieces. These guns naturally paid some attention to us, but with the exception of one shell which burst in our ranks before we filed out of the road and did some damage, not a man was hit in the Second Regiment. We had, really, remarkable luck, as they did some very good shooting and burst a number of shells and case-shots in our very faces. The Eleventh Massachusetts had two men killed and eight wounded by one shot. After half or three-quarters of an hour of this, the rebel battery limbered up and struck up the river road for Richmond, and our cavalry went after them. We gathered in quite a bunch of prisoners, singly and in little squads—men scattered around on outpost and picket duty, who came up out of the woods to see what the trouble was—and found out. One of these was particularly low-down mean and "sassy," and he and "Heenan" had it out. After looking us over he said there was one thing he cussed himself for, and that was that he looked so much like a Yankee. Then Nich., leaning on his gun, took Johnny in hand. He looked him up and down, with *such* a contemptuous sneer on his face. He commented on his general disreputable appearance, and to wind up with, set the fellow fairly wild with rage, by leaning forward and confidentially asking him how much nigger blood there was in him.

The rebel battery was posted under big trees in the grounds of the old mansion house on the hill. When we advanced to the position we found three or four wounded and one dead batteryman that the rebels had left behind. The dead man had been hit on the head by a piece of shell, and lay all curled up, but still tightly clasping in his hands the shell he was carrying to his gun.

We occupied the hill until Thursday morning, when we leisurely returned to camp. It was really a delightful outing. When we returned, my haversack was bulging with the fruits of my foraging—apples and plums, fresh pork, hog's liver, and one good fat chicken.

Perk. Lane and four others of our boys who were taken prison-

ers have returned. They have had a pretty hard time of it, but have many amusing stories to tell of prison life in Richmond. Provisions there are very high indeed—molasses six dollars a gallon, flour twenty-five dollars a barrel, bread twenty-five cents a loaf, and everything else in proportion. We are beginning to get a little soft bread now ourselves. Yesterday we had a whole loaf to a man, and we have had one meal before that.

Sunday, August 10.

I hear from home that a great many of the white-livered gentry swear they will not submit to being drafted. Then shoot them—that's my advice—and the Second Regiment would like the job. I can hardly write at all, the flies bother me so. They are here in millions, and nobody can take any comfort, for the torments.

LXVI

Camp near Alexandria, Va.,
September 6, 1862.

AFTER being here two days I have managed to get the materials together for writing a letter. We have had a mighty strenuous time since we marched away from Harrison's Landing [August 15]—in two hard battles, to say nothing of hard marches and transportation by sea and land, on crowded steamers and rattletrap freight cars. Marching to Yorktown, we were there loaded onto transports. No sooner were we fairly landed in Alexandria than we were toted out to Warrenton Junction and dumped, late at night, in the fields by the side of the road. Here, we were told, we would have a chance to rest, and we did, just one day and one night. That night Stonewall Jackson showed up at Manassas, directly in our rear, and we were sent after him. We came upon him at Kettle Run and had a rattling smart fight, with several hundred men killed and wounded on both sides. Two days later we were engaged in the second great battle of Bull Run. Our brigade here showed its mettle as it never had before, and especially the Second Regiment. We were ordered to advance through woods, without any supports, and attack the rebels behind a railroad grade five or six feet high. We went in. They gave us a volley, and we charged them, the Second going over the work with a yell and giving those

fellows the surprise of their life. It was savage work for a short time, but we were determined to drive them, and we did. Then we went for the second line, a few rods further on, and set them agoing. And pretty soon it became apparent that what there was left of us were being surrounded. Then we got out—we had to or be taken prisoners. We lost 147 men out of a little over 300 that went in, and most of these within a very few minutes. Gen. Grover said it was the greatest bayonet charge of the war.

I got my first man as I went over the bank. I dashed round a big bush in the very edge of the grade right onto a rebel, who threw his gun up aiming at somebody to my right. He never fired, for I gave it to him from the hip and doubtless saved the life of some Second Regiment man—I'll never know who. And just as I was starting on my return trip something tickled my upper lip and the roots of my nose, and for a while I was doing the ensanguined act on the smallest capital of any man in the regiment. It was a pretty close shave, all the same. One inch further, in the wrong direction, would have spoiled my beauty, and three inches would have spoiled me.

The actual fate of a lots of the boys is still in doubt. Charlie Smiley is missing, and nobody can tell anything about him. [He never came back.] Frank Robinson was shot through the bowels, near the railroad bank. Captain Carr told me, a few minutes later, that he had to leave him there, dying.

Father is over in Washington, but so far has been unable to get a pass to come over here, while I could not get a pass to go over there. It will be pretty tough if, after all I have gone through, and he so near, they do not give me a chance to see him.

I do not know how soon we may be on the move, but hope not for some time, for really the regiment is in pretty bad shape. The latest camp rumor is that we are going down to Budd's Ferry, which would be very nice, but is entirely improbable. But we certainly should have a chance to get our breath, at least. We have been in ten fights, and in some of them have borne the brunt. There are regiments here that have never been in any fight at all, but have laid back here in comfort, while others were getting the rough of it.

It is a beautiful day, and I am sitting in front of my tent, upon a pile of corn husks, the Potomac at my feet and the cities of Alexandria and Washington up there to the north.

LXVII

Camp near Alexandria, Va.,
September 14, 1862.

IT bids fair to be a very hot day, so I am starting my letter just as early as I can get down to business. Father got over the river three or four days ago. Dan. Clark [U. S. Senator] took it up with the War Department and Gerry got his pass. He is going to stay several days longer, and you can imagine how much I am enjoying his visit. He is spending a good part of his time visiting the hospitals and hunting out and cheering up the New Hampshire men he finds there. He doesn't say anything, but I have my doubts whether the lodgings here are fully up to his standard of comfort. Rod. Manning and I, in our capacity as chambermaids, make up the best bed we can with the materials at our command, and give E. G. the middle berth, with us under the eaves. But the ground is hard, and a knapsack or pair of shoes is not a real good pillow until you get fitted to them. Our guest grunts a good deal and turns over pretty often, and this morning I woke up before daylight and found him outside, sitting on a cracker box, over a little campfire he had nursed into action.

Since my last letter we have moved our camp about two miles, over to Fairfax Seminary, a brick building now occupied as a hospital, on the heights overlooking the city of Alexandria. Our camp is right to the rear of Fort Ward.

Did you ever know Joe Locke?—[Joseph L., a Manchester boy.] I saw him yesterday. He is in the Thirty-third Massachusetts, which is temporarily assigned to this brigade.

Father brought up from the city, yesterday, a big bag of flour, butter, and about all the other "fixings" he could lug, and there will be high living, for a time, in our tent. The laugh was on him, good and hard, the day we moved camp. He started out in the morning from our old camp, to visit the hospitals. When we arrived here he was at the Seminary, only a few rods away. He watched us come and pitch our tents, without any idea that it was the Second Regiment, and when he got ready to go he tramped back to the old camp, only to find himself among strangers. Fortunately, some one was able to direct him, and in due time he was back here with four extra miles of travel to his credit.

Those boxes that the boys sent for from Harrison's Landing came along yesterday, but a great deal of the stuff had been so long on the way that it had spoiled. When I see these new regiments coming out now I remind myself that when my term of service is ended they will be only half way through. But I hope that with the new calls for troops there will be enough to finish this up in so short a time that we can all be home before long.

Two or three of the boys supposed to have been killed at Bull Ren have turned up in the hospitals, but poor Frank Robinson is undoubtedly dead.

What company is your brother in? I will hunt him up if I can get to his regiment after it arrives. [James K. Lane, Company G, Eleventh N. H.]

LXVIII

Camp near Alexandria, Va.,
Sunday Evening, September 21, 1862.

I HAVE been down to the Eleventh Regiment to see James [K. Lane, "the girl's" brother] and other boys there. I went into the camp, stopped a while at one of the Manchester companies, where I found lots of fellows that I knew, and then started for Co. G to find James, when he bore down on me with all sail spread. I knew him, and he knew me, at sight, and we were just as well acquainted after we had shaken hands as though we had known each other for years.

We are doing a little digging now—just enough to keep our hand in—on rifle pits between Forts Worth and Ward. Our knapsacks, which were loaded onto barges when we left Harrison's Landing, got here only two days ago. I had begun to think they were gone for good, and was ready to bewail the loss of all my valuables, when they turned up safe and sound.

LXIX

Camp near Alexandria, Va.,
September 29, 1862.

IT is now almost nine o'olock in the evening, and I have had a pretty busy day. And tomorrow I go on picket, which will spoil two days more. So I guess I had better write tonight. This morning, as soon as I had eaten my breakfast, I started off for the Tenth Regiment. Met lots of old Manchester acquaintances, and Billy Cochrane, Ichabod Sargent Bartlett and I got together and had a real Excelsior Literary Society reunion. On my way back I called in at the Eleventh Regiment camp, and James walked a part of the way home with me.

To-night "Bobby" [Albert B.] Robinson, who was taken prisoner at the first Bull Run, got back to the company and the reception he got from those of us who are still left baffles all description. A camp story is going the rounds that Gov. Berry is trying to have this regiment sent to New Hampshire to recruit.

LXX

Camp near Alexandria, Va.,
Sunday, October 12, 1862.

HAVE just got back from the Thirteenth Regiment, where I found not a single man I knew, so I got a good long tramp for nothing. Got a mosaic letter from sister Addie Friday, made up of contributions from half a dozen of her friends. Have just had a pocket tournequit given me, a little instrument to stop the flow of blood from a wounded arm or leg. I don't see how it could be of much use in stopping a bloody nose. Charlie Smiley has never been heard from and doubtless never will.

So far as quarters are concerned, we are mighty comfortably situated just now. We have folded up our pieces of shelter tent and in their place pitched a camp of old-fashioned army "Sibleys." My tent-crew comprises seven good fellows. Each man has built himself a bunk, and still there is room to spare. The heavy tent-cloth keeps out the rain, so we have a perfectly dry nest. But there are persistent rumors that we will not remain here much longer.

LXXI

Camp near Alexandria, Va.,
October 19, 1862.

THE Eleventh Regiment is now in the vicinity of Harper's Ferry. Simons, who used to keep the bookstore, was down here yesterday, hunting up stragglers from the division. He thought that by this time the regiment might be over in Virginia.

The nights are getting to be uncomfortably cool. My two heavy blankets are not enough to keep me from feeling right chilly some nights. And I will have to draw an overcoat before long—something I have not felt the need of for some time. We went up to the fort today to report to the engineer for fatigue duty, but he was not at home and we didn't feel we had any call to hang around waiting for him.

LXXII

Camp near Alexandria, Va.,
October 28, 1862.

MY company went on picket last Saturday. It was a most disagreeable outing. A miserable rain storm came on in the night, and when the boys, after a very tardy relief, dragged themselves back to camp, they were cold, wet, bedraggled and discouraged. The rain held up yesterday forenoon, but the wind kept up in a wild gale. I hardly ever saw such a blow. Some of our tents were blown over. The tent-pins of my tent pulled out and I thought at one time the whole outfit was going sure enough. But we managed to anchor it, and today is one of the most delightful imaginable.

An order was recently issued by the War Department designed to fill up the regular cavalry regiments at the expense of the volunteers. It permits the transfer of ten men from each volunteer company, by re-enlistment for three or five years, or to serve out the unexpired part of their present enlistment. Lots of our boys have been getting sour over some of the conditions here and were more than anxious to try a change. So yesterday ten from this company marched down to the recruiting station at Alexandria and

joined the cavalry. When Col. Marston heard of this he was mad as a hornet, and when they shouldered their knapsacks this morning and marched away to their new command, he sent a guard down to arrest and bring them back. But Col. Starr ordered the guard away, telling them they had no business there, and that the men now belonged to the Second U. S. Cavalry. It is really a pretty hard blow to the old company, and makes me feel a little blue and lonesome. The lost men are among the cream of the old company—such men as "Heenan" and Perk. Lane and 'Gene Hazewell and my bunkie Rod. Manning.

We have not a quarter of a regiment to do duty now, and yet we are doing the work of a full regiment. And the people in New Hampshire think we are resting up! Why, I am now, and for some time have been, doing heavy guard duty every other day. There are lots of mighty cross men here, just now, who blame some of the officers for everything that goes wrong, and the dearest wish of many is to get out of the regiment as soon as possible.

I am sure the report that Charlie Smiley is in a hospital near Washington is incorrect. We have heard nothing of it here, and I fear we will never hear him sing those songs of his any more.

I began this letter this morning, and now it is evening. I have written little snatches as I had opportunity through the day. 'Gene Hazewell and one or two more of the "cavalry boys" have just come up visiting. They go over to Washington tomorrow. Col. Marston managed to get some sort of a veto put on any more cavalry enlistment down where our boys went, but some thirty or forty from other companies went off today and found another place where they could enlist, so they beat the old Colonel after all. Everything I can hear the boys talk about now is "*Cavalry*." Rod. Manning has just come in to bid me good bye. Good old Rod!—I almost wish I was going with him.

There is any quantity of noise about camp, and the new band of the Eleventh Massachusetts is contributing to the general hilarity by putting in some of its loudest work. It is getting awfully cold now —frost last night— and I can hardly hold my pen in my fingers.

LXXIII

Camp near Alexandria, Va.,
October 30, 1862.

FIVE minutes ago I received a letter addressed in your familiar hand. Four minutes and fifty-nine seconds ago I tore open the envelope. I extracted, first, a note, which I supposed you had inclosed from Mary. I opened it. "*Dear Brother*" stared me full in the face. The note surely was not for me, but for brother James—just your carelessness, sending it with the wrong letter. I unfolded your letter, and—what !—"*Dear Brother !*"—there it was again. The whole huge joke was clear. I hope James was not as grievously disappointed when he got my letter as I was when I got his. I return it, unread if not unopened.

LXXIV

Manassas, Va., *November 4, 1862.*

WE are once more out here at famous old Manassas. We left Alexandria Saturday afternoon, marching eight or nine miles in the direction of Fairfax Court House. Sunday we got in seventeen miles and camped by the side of Bull Run creek. Yesterday forenoon we marched up here—about three miles—and by night had our canvas city of little shelter tents set up and in good running order. Bill Ramsdell and I hitched up together, and we have got as cozy and comfortable a mansion as one could desire. There is any quantity of stuff lying around loose, and we had no difficulty in finding canvas to close up one end of the tent and boards enough to floor it. Then we got a quantity of hay for bedding, and what more could we wish for? We expect our big Sibley tents along soon, but Bill and I are well enough off as we are.

You know the rebel army occupied this place last winter and strongly fortified it. Their fortifications are on every side, very rough, but very strong, and now covered with weeds. But a little ways from our camp, littering the railroad tracks and the ground on either side, is the wreckage of the railroad trains destroyed by Jackson in the raid that culminated in the last Bull Run battle. In some

places are great piles of shovel blades, in others carbines—in fact, almost everything in the shape of army supplies and equipments—nothing left but the irons. Near by are the rebel log barracks, which we are tearing down for firewood. We have the entire division, now commanded by Sickles, here at Manassas, with about thirty pieces of artillery. I presume we will stay here some time, although it will depend in a great measure upon the movements of the main army. I see the mail bag has just gone out, so there is no chance for this to go today. I hear, also, that there are lots of apples outside our picket line, and I am going out to see about it.

LXXV

Camp on Centreville Heights, Va.,
Sunday, November 9, 1862.

YOU will see we have moved again. We remained at Manassas only two nights, when the Second Regiment was sent over here. Centreville Heights are four or five miles from Manassas, and, like that place, strongly fortified. There are reboubts and rifle pits almost without end, and the rebel barracks form a veritable log city. We relieved the 120th New York, which we found here, and now have the whole thing to ourselves. It has been a busy camp since we arrived, as the approaching winter warns us to prepare for storms. The abandoned rebel camps are a rich quarry of building materials—boards, nails, bricks, &c.—with which we have built a veritable shanty city on the ridge. Bill Ramsdell and I have put together one of the cutest little mansions that ever was. The ground dimensions are about seven feet by six, six feet high at the eaves. The fireplace and door take up the entire front, and the house is tight, snug and warm. The fireplace works to a charm, and there is a delicious sensation of coziness in sitting by your own cheerful fireside. We have an unlimited supply of wood, and tonight will sit and bask and chat and dream. We have a long shelf across the rear end, a mantle-shelf over the fireplace, and tomorrow will put in a bunk, a little table and some stools. Our fireplace is built up of flat rocks, the chimney of bricks, and topped out with a big iron kettle minus a bottom. And our cabin has a good board

floor. Now if they will only let us stay here a while and enjoy the fruits of our labors we will be a thousand times repaid. The winter season has fairly set in. Friday we had the first snow of the season and it was bitter cold. I happened to be on guard that day, and I had a pretty bleak time of it. My post was in a redoubt, from which I had the whole country clear to the Blue Ridge spread out before me like a map. The wind whistled and the snow blew, and, crouching under the protecting walls of the work, I tried to extract some comfort from the situation. When I went on at night I decided to have a fire, and I gathered up wood and built a good one in one of the angles of the fort. It was a little irregular for a sentry on post, and still was the right thing under the circumstances, and I got lots of comfort out of it. From my post I could trace the routes I followed on my two pilgrimages to Bull Run.

A long wagon train has come up, going out to McClellan, and six companies are going along with it as a guard. I am glad our company is not in the detail. They are to take four days' rations. The village of Centreville is close by our camp—a typical southern village of twenty-five or thirty houses, mostly deserted and all very dilapidated.

It is now evening, and I have been writing in the glow of a good fire. Just a few minutes ago Bill got up and went our of doors. In a few minutes the smoke was pouring into the room like a coalpit. I stood it till I was in danger of choking, then plunged outside just in season to see Bill dodge out of sight up the street, and to find a big pan covering the top of the chimney. When Bill came in I laid it to him and he owned up. He said he tried to peek into the tent, but the smoke was so thick he couldn't see anything, and he waited until he thought I never would be driven out. Bill is a good deal of a character. He is smart, fine-looking, well-educated, and an adventurer, having spent many years in California. His home is in Milford, and he went to Portsmouth as a lieutenant in the Milford company—and he was the best posted one in the line. When his company was broken up, he was too patriotic to back out, and after looking the ground over, he enlisted as a private in this company.

This very day terminates one-half of my enlistment—have turned the corner and am now headed for home.

Bill wants to go to bed, so good night.

LXXVI

Centreville Heights, Va.,
November 16, 1862.

HAVE had delightful weather the past week, but today it has come off colder and looks as if it was going to snow. I do not care if it does, having a snug, warm house and plenty of firewood. During the week a great many of the boys have visited the Bull Run battlefield. Some Company C boys who went over the first of the week found Frank Robinson's skeleton. It was fully identified by a peculiar filling of the teeth.

"Curley" [Granville S.] Converse and I took a day off and went over together. That field, where the battle-lines locked horns, was a field of horrors. The hasty and incomplete burials—in many instances no burial at all—with the work of the elements for months, had made a ghastly mess of things. Human skulls rolling about, with fragments of disjointed skeletons here and there. We found the body of one man lying all alone far out in the open field, which had lain undiscovered and undisturbed right where the poor fellow fell and died. There was one of the "missing," whose friends only know that he was lost in that fight. I could have gathered wagon loads of bullets, shell fragments and other debris. I send one bullet, with fragment of blue cloth attached, that tells its own story. It struck some poor fellow, going right through him, flattening on a bone as it passed and making a hook which tore off a fragment of blouse as it came out. But enough of horrors for one letter.

On our way back to camp "Curley" and I struck it rich. As we crossed Bull Run creek at the stone bridge we noticed, on the flats below, an old sow with a litter of pigs. And as we were studying the situation reinforcements came up—a fellow from some New York regiment. He had his old Belgian rifle with him, I had my six-shooter, and "Curley" had his jackknife. We held a council of war, decided on a plan of operations, and when we got through we had three of those pigs. They were neatly and expeditiously dressed and "Curley" and I headed for camp with a fine supply of pig pork swinging from a pole between us. Bill and I have been living on fresh pork ever since—pork steak, pork chops, pork cutlets, pork chitterlings. And Bill rigged up a wire contraption and roasted one choice cut by hanging before the fire.

Friday night we had quite a flutter in camp in anticipation of an attack. As near as I can find out, some place fifteen or twenty miles from here was threatened by some rebel cavalry sometime or other, and our super-alert officers determined not to be caught napping. So along in the night the men were routed up and ordered to pack up ready to march at a moment's notice, and to sleep with all their equipments on. Bill and I packed our blankets, but were not foolish enough to get into our harness—time enough for that after there was an alarm. And after a while, having discussed the situation and the probabilities, and feeling the need of our blankets, we pulled them out, made ourselves comfortable, and are still alive to tell the tale.

We have a battery of artillery here with us, two pieces in each of three redoubts. They are now surrounding the redoubts with an abattis of felled trees, the limbs and branches sharpened and pointed outward. It makes a very troublesome thing to climb over, particularly of a dark night.

Bill and I are seriously considering the advisability of enlarging our house. I think it probable we will tackle the job within a few days. We are also planning to take a little trip for a winter supply of walnuts and pork, both of which grow wild and are quite abundant out in the country. If we had a shot gun we could get any quantity of gray squirrels. If we get into any place this winter where we are reasonably sure of stopping, about the first thing I will do will be to send home for a box of good things to eat.

There is a little girl here in Centreville that I have taken quite a fancy to, she looks so much like you. She is about eight years old, and I saw her while on guard duty. She has features like you, hair like yours, and when she smiles her cheeks dimple up just as yours do. Yet she is a little slave girl, just for that drop of negro blood that I would never suspect.

* * * It is evening now, and I have seated myself on the edge of our bunk to finish my letter. Bill is sprawled out beside me, reciting poetry by the yard. We had a dress parade at sunset, Major Bailey in command. He has got a monstrous big overcoat, to match his gloves, hat, and shoulder-straps, and when I first saw him coming I thought it was a woman. I expect to be on guard tomorrow. Our detail for guard duty now is two men a day from

each company. As Company I now has only fifteen for duty, this brings us on guard about once a week. I heard somebody in the street say, just now, that Hooker has ordered us to report to him at the front. I am not over-anxious to get out of my comfortable little nest here, but if we are to go we will be delighted to serve again under glorious old Joe Hooker.

LXXVII

Camp at Wolf Run Shoals, on Occoquan Creek, Va.,
November 23, 1862.

I HAVE just finished reading letters from you and Addie that came in this morning. My fingers are so cold I can hardly clutch the pen, and the wind fairly howls as it comes tearing up the gorge. We left our Centreville camp Tuesday and arrived here the next day. Up to yesterday noon it rained without cessation, and as we trudged along through the mud and rain, or shivered in our wet beds with no protection but our little pieces of shelter-tent, you may be sure we thought of the happy homes we had left at Centreville. This is one of the wildest places I have seen in Virginia, the Occoquan rushing down through gloomy gorges clothed in a dense vegetation. The river here is about as wide as Elm street, and only to be crossed at fords, and at this season of the year wading rivers has its disagreeable features. On the crest commanding this ford the rebels had two forts, and along the hillside, between the forts and river, a line of rifle pits. Our regiment is camped on the hillside, between the forts and pits, and the declivity above us is so steep as to be almost a precipice.

Our entire division is now assembled in this immediate vicinity. The wind blows bitter cold today, and there is a good fire going in front of every tent. Bill is sitting on a half-barrel, outside the tent, writing letters, and I am on my blankets at the portal. Every few minutes we have to stop and thaw out at the fire.

Bill and I have really been living pretty high on this expedition. We lugged soft bread enough in our haversacks and knapsacks so that we still have a good supply left. The day we got here I waded back across the creek and went on an exploring expedition. Away back in the woods I came upon a little clearing. In it was an aban-

doned cabin, and it was a picture of desolation. I imagine there was a tragedy here. There were the ruins of a garden patch which evidently had been raided and plundered by vagabonds like myself. But they had not made a clean harvesting, and ploughing around with a sharp stick I managed to turn up quite a quantity of excellent potatoes. I also found some turnips and onions, and some fairly good apples, and came back to camp loaded with truck. We had fried chicken yesterday morning. Bill borrowed my revolver, went off on a scout, and came back with the bird. I asked him if he shot it or bought it; I suspect the latter. There are quantities of walnuts, butternuts and persimmons about here. These last are a wild plum, growing on a tree looking much like an apple tree. They are awfully puckery when green, and sickish sweet when dead ripe.

Two days before we left Centreville Johnny Ogden's wife came out to see him. It is no place for a woman, and my opinion is she had better have stayed at home. She has had a chance to see some of the rough side of campaigning. All that could be done has been done for her convenience and comfort. She has a fully inclosed tent here, thickly bedded with hay—the best quarters in camp.

I have some hopes now that this awful war will be over before many months. We all have confidence in Burnside and are hoping he will lead us to victory. "Officers' Call" has just sounded, and I am afraid it means orders to march.

P. S.—It was an inspection, and we are now ordered to carry an extra pair of shoes in our knapsacks. That looks like some traveling. One pair of my size will be about all I will care to tote.

LXXVIII

Camp opposite Fredericksburg, Va.,
Sunday, November 30, 1862.

THIS is the last day of Fall. Tomorrow commences the Winter campaign, which, if carried on, will necessarily be one of privations and hardships. We arrived in our present position day before yesterday, and are encamped, with the rest of the Army of the Potomac, opposite the ancient city of Fredericksburg, which,

with the rest of the territory on that side of the Rappahannock, is held by the rebel army. I can distinctly see their camps and camp fires from where I am sitting. All the New Hampshire troops now in Virginia are camped right here within a distance of a mile or two and I have met hundreds of old friends and acquaintances. I have seen James several times, and we had a hearty laugh over that mix up you made in our letters.

I am going over to the cavalry, right away, to get something to eat. The lean years follow the fat years and the famine follows the feast—and I am almost starved. Have been on short allowance for three days. Sutlers are simply giving their goods away—butter, 50 cents; cheese, 45 cents; tobacco, $2.00 a pound—and everything else in proportion. We have not had a mail for several days, but Bill Pendleton, our mail agent, tells me there will be one tonight.

Just this moment I have heard something that encourages me to have hopes that I may see you before long. Johnny Ogden told Bill Ramsdell that Colonel Marston told his (Johnny's) wife that the time was approaching when the question of this regiment going home would be presented in such a manner that it could not be refused. He thought, though, we would stay and see the Fredericksburg affair through.

We have just got an order for inspection this afternoon, and the men are sitting around on the ground taking their guns to pieces to clean them. I might as well get busy with the rest.

LXXIX

Camp in the Mud,
Opposite Fredericksburg, Va.,
December 5, 1862.

I INTEND only to *begin* this letter today, as I cannot hold on long in my present position—the ground for a seat, my knees for a writing desk, and my fingers blue with cold. A cold, drizzling rain set in today, which drove me under my shelter tent. Every little while a drop will splash down over my paper, and I cannot straighten up without hitting my head and shoulders on the canvas. Sally Shepherd's brother—"Doctor"—was over here yesterday from the Ninth Regiment.

Saturday, December 6.

You see I didn't get a great ways on your letter yesterday. The rain changed to snow and beat in at the open end of the tent, so I had to leave off writing and get boughs to close it up. This done, Bill and I rolled ourselves up in our blankets and did not rout out until supper time. As soon as supper was swallowed we denned in again and did not dig out until morning. It snowed considerable during the night and our light tent sagged with the weight of the snow, but, curled up like two bears in winter quarters, we were very snug and warm.

We have just drawn new clothing, and I was getting in need of it. Bill and I have also come into possession of two extra pieces of shelter tent, so we can now close our house in on all sides; and when we get the rubber blankets we are expecting we will be pretty well heeled for winter.

Sunday, December 7.

We are expecting to march soon with eight or ten days' rations in our haversacks and on the wagons. We are expecting orders to cook extra rations right away. A good many troops are embarking at Belle Plain, eight or ten miles below here, but for what destination I do not know. All the line officers are confident we are going home before long. I understand the Adjutant told some of the boys who were transferred to the Regulars that the regiment was going home soon; but that may have been simply to make them regret their desertion of the Second.

It looks like winter now—as it is. The ground is covered with snow and the wind blows cold. Woe be to him who has no overcoat. We are beginning to realize the beauties of a winter campaign. But the poorly-clad rebels must suffer much more than we do. Deserters tell us a great many are barefoot, and that General Lee has issued instructions for them to make moccasins of the raw hides of their cattle.

I am on police duty today, so between lugging water for the cooks, wood for my fire, and writing letters, I will manage to make a fairly busy day. Johnny Ogden's wife has gone home. There is a story that two men were found dead in their tents last night in the camp of the Seventeenth Maine—probably frozen to death, as it was bitter cold. As for myself, I am equipped now so I sleep as well as if I was on a feather bed. There are more than twenty stories afloat about our going home.

LXXX

In Camp opposite Fredericksburg, Va.,
Tuesday Evening, Dec. 16, 1862.

THERE has been a terrible battle, in which New Hampshire has borne her full share and lost many a loyal son. Thursday we began to lay pontoon bridges at points about two miles apart, on which to cross over and attack the rebels on the heights around Fredericksburg. The rebels vigorously opposed this work, especially at the upper bridge, crossing into the city, and there was heavy skirmishing and a tremendous artillery fire before the bridges were laid and the army commenced crossing. Our regiment crossed Friday night, at the lower pontoons, which we were at once stationed to guard. The great fight took place on Saturday, when thousands of men were killed or wounded. Our regiment was not engaged that day, and by climbing a little elevation near the bridges I could see the fringe of the fight, at long range, over the trees and houses of Fredericksburg. Our men advanced with the utmost bravery, but the rebels had an enormous advantage in position, upon the hills and behind breastworks, and our men charged across the open plain only to be slaughtered by thousands.

Saturday night two regiments relieved us at the bridges and we rejoined our brigade at the front. Early Sunday morning an audacious rebel battery took position in a field on our front and opened on us. The Pennsylvania boys on the picket line couldn't do a thing with them; but we sent out our Company B, and when their Sharp's rifles began to bark the rebels couldn't get away from those guns fast enough. And they made no further attempt to work them that day. We kept out one company at a time, relieving as fast as ammunition was used up. I fired fifty rounds. A dozen of us lay in a ditch by the side of the road, and kept up a brisk fire on a couple of houses used by the rebels as a cover. We fired over each other's heads sometimes and had a merry time. Some of our boys got cover behind a big pile of loose lumber, and we kept two men behind an old chimney.

After this work had been going on nearly all day, there was a truce for some purpose or other, on that part of the line, the firing ceased, and the two skirmish lines mingled together like the best of

friends, comparing notes and joking and chaffing each other. One rebel colonel, for some reason or other, was especially interested in the man behind the chimney and wanted to meet him. After a time the men leisurely meandered back to their hiding places, but there was very little shooting after that exchange of courtesies.

We recrossed the river last night, and got back into our old camp late this afternoon. I saw James this afternoon. He was unhurt and was writing letters. His regiment suffered severely, losing over two hundred. Jason Barker was killed. In the Manchester Battery two of my old acquaintances—John Fish and Tom Morrill—were killed, and Bill Fish was wounded in the foot. Charlie Vickery, of my company, was wounded in the neck. The regiment lost only twelve men wounded [two mortally.]

I will write home tomorrow, and meantime you must slip up and let the folks know I am unhurt. I am glad I am to name my little sister. Shall send some short, pretty name. For the past week my rations have consisted solely of salt pork and crackers, and I am so hungry I think I shall send for a box.

LXXXI

Camp opposite Fredericksburg, Va.,
December 23, 1862.

RECEIVED a letter from Addie last night and she said they had thought of naming the little sister *Flora*. I had written a day or two before and suggested the name *Cora*. Now, isn't it a queer coincidence that we should think of names so near alike? Either is pretty enough, and I do not care a snap which they adopt. Addie wrote she imagined I would send *Nealie* for a name—and I did think some of doing so.

LXXXII

Camp opposite Fredericksburg, Va.,
January 1, 1863.

HAPPY NEW YEAR! and a great many of them! The new year presents itself to us in very pleasant fashion—clear and bright, but cold enough to suit a Laplander. James was over here and stayed with me Monday night, and we had a gay time. We sat before the fire and chatted and laughed and planned good times for the future. Then we rolled up in our blankets and slept. Jim was the first awake and kicked me out of bed, whereupon I arose in my wrath and drove him out of camp.

I went over to the Ninth Regiment to inquire concerning Sally Shepherd's brother [Enoch O., familiarly known as "Doctor."] I could learn nothing further than that he was missing and had not been heard from since the battle. No one knew when he fell. I pity Sally and her mother, as there can now be no doubt that he is another victim of this accursed rebellion. The note written to Sally was doubtless from some one of the burial party who went over, under a flag of truce, to bury our dead, and who, finding the envelope on a body, was thoughtful enough to write to the address. It must remove from her mind all doubts as to his fate.

For days the boys have been kept in a constant stew with stories of marching, but I am not losing any sleep over any of them. My main effort now is to get all the bodily comfort I can out of the situation. Well well, of all the sights! A load of soft bread has just come in. The most popular camp story just now is that Marston is to be appointed Military Governor of Washington and the Second Regiment is going there as provost guard and is to be armed with Allen & Wheelock breechloading rifles.

Bill Ramsdell, who disappeared some little time ago, has been heard from. As near as I can make out he thought that while furloughs were being passed out to the favored few he was entitled to one himself, and applied for it. He got turned down, and now he turns up at his home in Milford and writes that he is recruiting his strength and is coming back "when his furlough expires."

I have got my tent raised up on logs, with a good bunk of poles and a turf fireplace. Have a big pile of wood to burn tonight, and will have a good fire to drive away Jack Frost.

HEN. EVERETT

LXXXIII

Camp opposite Fredericksburg, Va.,
January 9, 1863.

CHARLIE VICKERY is going home on furlough tomorrow. So am I—in about sixteen months. We have moved camp about a mile and a half, and already have very comfortable winter quarters fixed up. Yesterday I wrote home for a box. The chances are good for our staying here long enough for me to get it. I am tenting now with George Lawrence, who was one of my tent's crew at Camp Sullivan. Of my six tentmates there, two have been killed, one died of disease, and one joined the cavalry. Ed. Bailey [Major commanding the regiment] is under arrest on charges of disobeying orders of General Carr. I don't imagine it is anything very serious.

LXXXIV

Camp opposite Fredericksburg, Va.,
January 16, 1863.

EVERYTHING seems to be going wrong today. The wind has been blowing a perfect hurricane; last night it rained hard; just now there is a good prospect of our having to leave the snug huts we have built and go somewhere—the Lord only knows where. Marston has been appointed Brigadier-General, and the story persists that he has had this regiment detached for special duty at Washington and that the order is now at headquarters.

Bill Ramsdell's "furlough" appears to be still in good working order. There are doubtless some details under the surface that we don't know, but I'll bet on Bill. So will all the old boys. He was not the type of patriot who couldn't serve his country unless he was ornamented with shoulder straps, and there is a quite general sentiment that smaller men than he is have refused him a square deal.

There was a terrible catastrophy in my tent last night. Over our bunk was a shelf loaded with a miscellaneous assortment of a little of everything—letters, papers, portfolio, a dish of cooked rice and a can of molasses. All of a sudden, Lawrence, in performing some of his antics, sent the shelf flying, and such a mess! The molasses seemed to have a chemical affinity for everything there was in that tent, and it is unnecessary to say it was a total loss.

Perk. Lane, Rod. Manning and the other boys who went into the cavalry are visiting in camp. Their regiment is near here. Hen. Pillsbury and Joe Hubbard are here and well. Joe is captain of Company B. He is one of the best fellows and most popular officers in the regiment.

LXXXV

Camp near Falmouth, Va.,
January 24, 1863.

SINCE last Tuesday we have been paddling around in the rain and mud to our heart's content—and a good deal more. The short of the story is that Gen. Burnside intended to cross the Rappahannock a few miles above here and attack the enemy, but owing to continuous rains the roads became impassable and the army was obliged to wallow back to its old position and wait for better conditions. Our division left camp Tuesday noon, in a pouring rain, and accomplished about a mile and a half, under difficulties. Then we waited until about nine o'clock at night, when we were ordered back to our camps. Wednesday we tried it again and managed to get about six miles. The mud was simply awful, and it was almost an utter impossibility to move the wagons and artillery at all. The Manchester battery was striddled along the road, a gun here and a caisson there, over a stretch of three miles. And that was the way everything on wheels was hung up. General Burnside had issued an address to the army, saying they were soon to meet the enemy and enjoining them to display their old-time bravery. But God willed that the battle should not take place just at present, and with the elements at command He prevented it. Yesterday the division made its may back to the old camps. Lawrence and I rehabilitated our old shanty and are now as comfortable and cozy as you please.

I saw George Dakin day before yesterday—the first time since he went into the army. I got a letter from Addie and expect my box is on the way. I am actually suffering for something good to eat. Have you seen the picture I sent Addie? Did you ever see a more disreputable-looking outlaw?

LXXXVI

Headquarters Sickles' Division,
Near Falmouth, Va.,
Sunday, February 8, 1863.

HAVE you begun to wonder why I have not written for a fortnight? Well, I have made another lightning change and am now on the provost guard at division headquarters. I am not prepared to say that I exactly relish the change. I was denned in for a comfortable, easy-going winter, without much work, when I was pitchpoled into this place, where it is nothing but hard work. Lawrence and I were notified by the Orderly Sergeant that we were detailed for special duty, that we were to take our entire outfit with us, and report to the Adjutant. We dismantled our shack, packed up, and reported. We found nine more victims, from other companies. I was placed in charge of the squad and ordered to report to the Provost Marshal at Sickles' headquarters. It snowed and was awful cold. Along with detachments from other regiments of the division we were quartered two nights in a barn, which was dry enough, but we came near freezing. Then we pitched our tents and began to hustle to make ourselves comfortable. In company with four from my own squad and two from the First Massachusetts, I am now comfortably housed in a log and canvas palace, 17x7 feet, inside measurement, with a big fireplace and good bunks.

I have been promoted, "for gallant and meritorious"—*check*. When I reported my squad, I gave in, of course, the names and rank of all as privates. My first detail was for guard duty. I stood a post for two hours, and I did a lot of thinking. I had been taking things in, and had discovered that a private soldier on provost guard had about the worst job in the army. It was not only guard duty, but police duty of all kinds, and they were hewers of wood and luggers of water for everybody. I wasn't brought up that way. And at last I made a guess, and I guess that I made a pretty good guess. When I came off post I marched up to the Marshal's tent, saluted, and delivered the following oration: "Captain, I am Private Haynes of the Second New Hampshire. The order for detail from my regiment called for ten privates and a corporal. We are very short of non-commissioned officers, so I was placed in charge as an acting corporal. It was my oversight in not so stating when I reported

my detachment. So I was given a post as sentry today and have stood it, but I thought it best to call your attention to the matter." When the next relief was called Sergeant-Major Featherstone announced: "Corporal Haynes takes charge of this relief." Relieved from a common laborer's drudgery and from the heavier part of guard duty, I will get along, probably, as comfortably as I would with the regiment. And I am in position to make it easier for my boys from the Second. Featherstone seems to have a pretty high idea of the average capacity of my New Hampshire Yankees. The other day he called on me for a skilled wood worker, who could do repair work mainly. I recommended my bunkmate Lawrence, and now George has the softest job of any man on the Guard—nothing to do but whittle. And the axe-helves and tool handles he turns out to replace the broken ones are really a credit to his skill.

My box has not come yet. The express matter is at Belle Plain, but it is hard to get anything but army supplies up over the railroad. I have not seen James for some time. His camp is a mile and a half from here, and I have to stick pretty close to these headquarters, just now. I have heard that the Ninth Army Corps, to which his regiment belongs, is on the way to North Carolina. If so, I shall not see him again. He was over here a few days ago, but I was off in the woods with a squad of men. [I never saw him again. He was killed, the following year, at Spottsylvania.]

LXXXVII

Headquarters Berry's Division,
Near Falmouth, Va.,
February 15, 1863.

OUT I go again into the cold—the same old story. Somebody else is enjoying the cozy quarters I helped build over at the Fitzhugh house, while I am sitting in my little shelter tent, hardly big enough for two, with the rain pouring and all my surroundings wet and uncomfortable. It all comes from the fact that Sickles, having been put in command of the corps, retains his old quarters as corps headquarters, while Berry, put in command of the division, has to set up housekeeping somewhere else, taking the division provost guard along with him, of course. We are now about two miles

from the camp of the Second, and fully a mile from any of the division, and it is said we are to move again in a day or two. The entire brigade is out on picket now. Went out three days ago, and rations have been sent out for three days more. They are out six or seven miles, above Falmouth. My box has not reached me yet, and I am getting a little mad about it. Many of the boys have got theirs, which started at the same time; but there is still a great pile at the landing and mine is probably among them.

Charlie Vickery has got back looking like a new man. I was glad to see him, for he brought me a half-dollar's worth of postage stamps just as I was all out and wondering where I would get more.

The furlough excitement might as well be set down as a delusion, except for the favored few. Only one man in my company—Dave Perkins, the orderly sergeant—has got one yet. One a week—or every ten days! You see, by the time the last man gets his furlough it will be time for his discharge. It will not be many weeks before Uncle Joe Hooker will be making a forward movement and the furloughs will be shut off with a snap. As a matter of form, and just to see what he would say, I asked Lieutenant Gordon, commanding the company, to send my name in among the first. He said he should give the married men the preference. When I asked him if the men who were engaged had any special standing, he looked as if he thought I was trifling.

Major Bailey was before a court martial a few days ago. Ed must be getting used to it. The charge was, I believe, disrespect of superior officers. I have not heard the result.

LXXXVIII

Headquarters Berry's Division,
Near Falmouth, Va.,
February 23, 1863.

A WEEK ago or so, the story was afloat that the regiment was going home right away, "and no mistake." Col. Marston had been down here, and had the consent of the President, the Secretary of War, and General Hooker, and we were sure to go. All the officers took stock in the story, and I did really hope that by next Saturday we might be in Manchester. But even now the hopes

of going have died out and the excitement subsided. Such stories have been let loose every two or three weeks as regular as clock-work.

You would have screamed if you could have seen the ridiculous sleighride I did today. It was a lark of the General's staff officers. They had a set of sleigh-runners made and a wagon body mounted on them. The sleighing would not have been called sleighing at all up in New Hampshire. But they started out, with one lady in the party, tipped over twice, and then went to smash entirely.

Ed. Bailey's commission as Lieutenant-Colonel has come. His court martial is ended, and whatever the findings he is returned to duty. Frank Wasley is now Sergeant Major. One of the boys saw my box at the landing yesterday. There are several inches of snow on the ground, which fell yesterday; but it is warm today and the snow will not last long.

Wednesday.—I have been busy the past two days. Yesterday my patience about gave out. We had two choppers out in the woods, and along in the afternoon I was sent out with teams and a squad of men to gather up and bring in the wood they had down. Before we got to the woods we met one of the choppers, who told me there was no need to go any farther, as there was no wood cut; that they would not allow him to chop anywhere, as the trees were wanted to build corduroy roads with. Of course I turned around and went back—a distance of two miles. We had not been in camp fifteen minutes before the other chopper came in and said he had been chopping all day and had lots of wood down. The first chopper had not been out at all, but had been having a glorious drunk, and told me the story he did to get himself out of a scrape. Of course we had to go out again—and of all the times! It looked sometimes as if we never would get out of the woods. The teams got stuck, and chains broke. There was an apology for a road, but its main features were stumps, roots and bog holes. Nothing but an army wagon could ever have stood the strain, and nothing but a team of army mules, guided by army mule drivers, would ever have attempted to get in and out of that place. But we got our wood, and were back at headquarters, tired but triumphant, about eight o'clock in the evening.

Captain Gordon told me, yesterday, that Colonel Marston had declined his Brigadiership and was coming back to take command of the regiment, much to Bailey's disappointment.

George Lawrence is expecting a furlough to come along tomorrow, and he says: "Finish a long letter and I will carry it as far as Lawrence for you." But I guess it will go as quickly by mail.

NOTE

The interval of time between the preceding and the following letters is explained by the fact that the stories and rumors of "going home" actually materialized at this time. The regiment left the Army of the Potomac February 26 and arrived in New Hampshire March 3. It left the state for the front again May 25, arriving in Washington May 27. The "Soldier Boy" and "The Girl I left behind me" were married March 9.

LXXXIX

Washington, D. C., *May 27, 1863.*

GOT into Washington this morning at half-past six—less than forty-eight hours on the route from New Hampshire. George Slade lost his knapsack somewhere on the way. Mrs. Wasley was at Concord and rode down on the train. The last I saw of her she was standing on the plank walk, her eyes full of tears. I was glad you did not come to the depot when the regiment passed through. George Slade's wife was at Concord, almost heart-broken. [It was their last farewell—George never came back.]

We are stopping now at the "Soldier's Rest." Captain Gordon tells me we are ordered to report to General Casey, in command of the defenses of Washington, and will probably stay about here some time. The Fourteenth New Hampshire are here, camped on the hill not far away.

We rode from Norwich, Conn., to Jersey City on an old freight boat. There were no bunks, and I found the deck planks of about the usual quality and finish. The good grub the family so liberally stocked me up with at Manchester is not all gone yet, notwithstanding I have shared it freely with the poor and needy. I saw Norm. Gunnison at Philadelphia. He was discharged for disability, not long ago, and is now working on some newspaper.

XC

Camp Marston, Washington, D. C.,
May 30, 1863.

WE are now fairly settled down in camp on what is known as East Capitol Hill, with nothing to do but eat, sleep, and drill, and make ourselves as comfortable as we can. The camp is right out in the open, with not as much as a huckleberry bush for shade. But we have A-tents to sleep in, which are roomy and comfortable—much more so than our "shelters." There are only three in my tent—Herm. Sleeper, "Curley" Converse, and yours truly. George Slade did come in, but he was detailed as company cook and now has a tent of his own.

I saw Farnsworth over in the city day before yesterday—[Major Simeon D., Paymaster, onetime publisher of the Manchester *American*.] We were marching toward Long Bridge, headed for Camp Chase on Arlington Heights, and I had a chance to speak to him a moment. Our destination was changed however before we reached the bridge and we were about-faced and marched to our present camp.

I saw Captain Bruce [John N.] Tuesday. He is a sergeant in the Fourteenth. He tapped his chevrons and observed, with a smile: "Coming *up*, you see!" Which reminded me of the old, old times before the war, when he used to parade the streets of Man-

chester at the head of his crack company, the admiration and envy of every boy in town.

"Old Beauregard" [Orrin S. Gardner,] the old sinner whose picture I sent home once, has deserted. Before we left the state he was arrested and put in the guard house on mere suspicion that he was going to desert; but the morning we started off he was missing sure enough and has not since been heard from. My own private opinion is if he had been let alone he'd have been all right.

General Martindale was in camp yesterday, and the camp gossips greased up the old rumor machine and ground out the following: Martindale said he should try to keep us here, as he wanted one such regiment in this place. And it is supposed that Marston is doing what he can to keep us in the defenses.

Afternoon.—One of our boys has just come in from the Fourteenth and says they are going to march tomorrow. I wish we could move over to their camp, as it it is a delightful location, with shade trees and nice clean grounds.

Our batch of brand-new lieutenants are having the usual experience in getting fitted into their places, and are subjected to the merciless criticism of the old men for any blunder they may happen to make. Frank Wasley was officer of the guard yesterday and got badly rattled and mixed up. It was especially mortifying, as many officers from other regiments were out to see our guard mount. We are to be inspected tomorrow forenoon by an officer from General Casey's staff, and I have been polishing up my old Springfield. I have been in swimming once in the East Branch.

Sunday.—Two of our boys who were in the city yesterday saw General Marston and asked him what was to be done with us. He said we would be with our old division in the Army of the Potomac within eight days.

Our inspection is over. It was not an exhausting ordeal. The inspecting officer, as it was very hot and dusty, probably was as anxious as we were to have it over with. He directed the Quartermaster to draw straw enough to bed every tent.

I have sure-enough cow's milk in my coffee quite often now. Quite a number of cows find free pasturage and very good grazing on the open lands in the vicinity of the camp.

XCI

Camp Marston, Washington, D. C.,
Saturday, June 6, 1863.

JUST at present we are not living very high—not near as well as we did at Falmouth. But George Slade is cook for the company, and he says: "When you want something special, Mart, just give me the wink, and if it's in the cook house you'll get it." This noon we had boiled potatoes and boiled salt pork. Tonight we are to have hasty pudding and molasses. Somebody has been stealing everything eatable lying around loose in the cook house, and Slade has gone down to the city to buy some ipecac. He will set his trap and there is bound to be some awfully sick fellows about camp before long.

I cut a lot of bullrushes down by the East Branch this afternoon —enough to thickly carpet the whole floor of our tent—and they make a glorious bed indeed.

Monday evening the third brigade of the Pennsylvania Reserve Corps, who have been camped on this side for some time, crossed the river, and the Second and Fourteenth New Hampshire and Thirty-fourth Massachusetts are now the only troops on this side. The Fourteenth is doing provost and guard duty in the city.

We got a belated mail last Tuesday. I had a letter from Frank Morrill dated March 2, one from you dated February 24, and a paper from Roger mailed in February. This mail had been hung up in Washington ever since we went home. Of course the boys had lots of fun circulating items of "news."

Last Wednesday, as I had a pass, I went down to the city, sight seeing. In the forenoon I visited the Patent Office and was greatly interested. Besides the models of inventions there were many relics and curios—Washington's effects, the presents from the Emperor of Japan, treaties made with various nations, the coat Gen. Jackson wore at New Orleans, and thousands of other objects of interest. In the afternoon I went down to the Capitol. I have been there many times before, but never tire of looking over that building. There are now about five hundred men at work on it. The next time I have a pass I am going down to the Navy Yard.

Gen. Marston was up here Wednesday, looking fat and hearty.

Our cooks have got a barrel of potatoes and a lot of cooking

utensils, bought from the "company funds." This is about the first use that has ever been made of this fund. Our company's fund now amounts to several hundred dollars, and some of the boys were making ugly inquiries as to why it was not being used for the benefit of the men to whom it belongs.

The drummers and fifers of the regiment have been on exhibition for the past half hour, at the same time giving us a concert that it would not be easy to catalogue. Of all the rattletybang and screeching! On dress parade they made a blunder, then had a big jabbering over it, and came pretty near having a fight. As a punishment they were mounted on barrels out on the parade ground and ordered to do their best. They have a very appreciative and enthusiastic audience, but are about the maddest set of men I ever saw. I wouldn't be surprised if, after we get paid off, some of the indignant musicians turned up missing.

Sunday, June 7.

We had a good rain last night and it is cool and nice today. We have had our morning inspection and expect to be gone over, later, by one of Gen. Casey's staff officers. We had forty rounds of cartridges dealt out this morning. They are called "musket shells"—made to explode—and woe to the Johnny that stops one! We had boiled ham this morning. I got a big bone for my ration, gnawed off all I wanted for breakfast, and have enough left for supper, when no meat ration is served. Just think of it—your husband hiding away bones, like a dog, against future needs.

Alba Woods just sailed down by my tent spreading a story he heard in another company—that Companies I and F are going up to Chain Bridge today. I don't care a darn, one way or the other.

Being right here in Washington, we put on a good many airs—white gloves, shiny boots, &c. To see the regiment on dress parade now one would hardly recognize it as the same set of men that we have seen plugging through the Virginia mud or dust, dirty, ragged, and lousy.

We have another man in our tent—one of the Seventeenth—James C. Rand. He is nineteen years old, was married just before he came away, and was in the Sixth New Hampshire a while.

XCII

Camp Marston, Washington, D. C.,
June 10, 1863.

YOU must not be disappointed if I make a short letter of this. I came off guard this forenoon and am going to have a pass to the city. Tomorrow morning, at sunrise, we start to rejoin the army on the Rappahannock, and I will write more as soon as we are with the old crowd again.

XCIII

Ten Miles above Falmouth, Va.,
June 12, 1863.

DO not know when I shall have a chance to finish or to send this letter, but just now I have plenty of time to begin it. We left Washington about noon yesterday, on the steamer "Hugh Jenkins," for Acquia Creek. There we took a train for Stoneman's Switch, where we arrived about dark and bivouacked for the night. I did not go to the trouble to pitch any tent, but "Curley" Converse and I made up a bed together and slept soundly. I woke up once during the night and found the rain beating in my face, which was very easily remedied by simply pulling my head down under the blankets. This morning we were off again at about sunrise. I understand our destination is Warrenton, about forty miles from Falmouth. The rest of the Third Corps started yesterday, and is on ahead somewhere. We may not catch up with them before they reach Warrenton. We halted here about noon, having made a march of a dozen miles or so during the forenoon. Notwithstanding the showers in the night, the roads were dusty and the march fatiguing.

I made a pretty busy day of it the day before we left Washington. I went down to the city in the forenoon, after getting off guard. First, up to the post office and posted my letters. Then down to a Dutch cobbler's shop, where I had some staving thick soles and heels put on my boots. I waited while he did the job, and when he got through it was dinner time. So I went into a restaurant and ate ham and eggs, strawberries and cream, and other luxuries. I didn't know as I should have another chance at a de-

cent meal for eleven months, and I filled up accordingly. Then I went around and laid in a big stock of writing materials and stamps and was ready to go to the front.

About two miles back from here is a little brick church, known as "Hartwood Church," which possesses a great deal of interest on account of the pictures and inscriptions on the walls. There is a picture, drawn by one of our cavalrymen, representing a cavalry charge. It is on a grand scale, drawn with charcoal, and is wonderfully well done. The cavalryman artist—so the story goes—began it for his own amusement, and was "laying on the colors" when the Rebs dropped in and took him prisoner. They insisted on his finishing up his picture, so he drew in a lot of ragged, unkempt Rebs running as fast as their legs would carry them; and the artist's captors laughed and roared and thoroughly enjoyed the lampoon on themselves. There is an inscription on the wall which is a rather neat little puzzle—"Major BBBB CCCC." Have you made it out? Major Forbes' Forces.

We have run across a good many of our old brigade boys, and they were mighty glad to see the Second again. Ran across Hen. Everett today. Also Stearns, who used to keep store in Manchester. He was on a sutler's wagon—is sutler for some Pennsylvania regiment, I understand. A two-years regiment, whose term had expired, passed us on its way home today.

Rappahannock Station, *June 13.*

We have had a hard march today and I am very tired. The dust was simply stifling, and some merciless old rascal on horseback, at the head of the column, evidently set the pace and gauged the capacity of the men at what he and his horse could do. We were hustled right along, hour after hour, without a moment's rest. Fool orders were read in the morning, that if three men straggled from any one company the officers of that company would be tried by court martial. But this did not prevent straggling, for many men simply *could not* keep up—especially our Seventeenth recruits.

We are getting mighty hard up for grub and are anxiously looking for our supply train. When I started out this morning I had a piece of boiled salt pork about as big as two fingers. At noon we halted about three-quarters of an hour for rest and refreshments.

We were short on both. Other troops had camped on the same ground and moved on, and among the embers of one of their campfires I saw some ribs of fresh pork. Some old Virginia razor-back had died to make a Yankee holiday, and perfectly good pork had been recklessly and wastefully thrown onto the coals. I pulled out a chunk that looked good to me, carefully scraped and pared off the charred outside, and never had a better pork roast than I got by picking those ribs. Tonight I made a sumptuous repast on hardtack and water. I missed, however, the "one day's solitary" that usually goes with that fare up in New Hampshire.

We do not know whether or not we are to go back to our old brigade, but we are now with the old Excelsior Brigade. Rappahannock Station, where we are camped, is a fine location—open, rolling country, with two or three little redoubts in sight from our camp. The rebels are on the other side of the river, and we have a strong force here, facing them. It is getting so dark I can hardly see, so good night.

Sunday, June 14.

We drew three days rations today and are under orders to be ready to march at a moment's notice. Three regiments from this brigade are on picket, and it is very evident that trouble is apprehended in some direction. We will probably move from here very soon, and the fact that our wagon trains are not brought up here is a pretty good indication that we are going to move fast and don't want to be encumbered with a train.

I had as much beefsteak as I could eat this morning. George Lawrence cut up the fresh beef, and as pay for his trouble took what he wanted for breakfast. This noon we were served with "*beef soup*"—the water in which our fresh beef was boiled, with hardtack crumbled into it.

We are camped, I am told, on one of the estates of John Randolph, well known in Virginia history. One of the natives tells me the soldiers have burned thirty-five miles of fences on this plantation. I suppose while I am here by the Rappahannock, crouched in my tent and wondering if those dark clouds over yonder mean rain, you are listening to the words and admonitions of good old Parson Wallace.

We have just had a little excitement. Three foolish hogs vent-

ured out into sight upon the meadow on our front, and more than two hundred whooping savages started out in chase and killed two with clubs.

We have just got word that we are to march tonight at sunset, and of course are speculating as to the movement. The favorite opinion of our most astute camp strategists is that Hooker is going to fall back to Washington and the Potomac, and that we are way up here as a sort of rear guard, to give the rebels a hack if they try to crowd too hard. I have got back again to the old, careless army spirit of don't-care-a-cent, and take everything as philosophically as circumstances will permit. We have just heard the roar of guns in the direction of Warrenton, which is ominous. I have had all the cherries I could eat today. Have been jotting this letter down, bit by bit, through the day. The old fellow who lives in a house near the camp has a son who is a colonel in the rebel army. "Curley" Converse is smashing up a blacking brush that he won't carry any further and won't leave for the enemy. He says: "If I had a house out here I would burn it up before I would let those fellows have the use of it." I must pack up now and be ready to march.

Manassas Junction, *Tuesday, June 16.*

After a most exhausting march we find ourselves here at Manassas once more. We left Rappahannock Station Sunday night at ten o'clock and marched to Catlett's Station—about fifteen miles—arriving there yesterday morning at seven o'clock. At two o'clock in the afternoon we continued on to this place—another fifteen miles. When we arrived here, about midnight, I was actually all in. Half a dozen of us, all in the same condition, consulted together and decided that if the column passed out of the line of rebel redoubts we would drop out, get a little rest and sleep, and chase on and catch up with the regiment early in the morning. We fell out, went up into one of the redoubts, laid down on the grass carpet that covered everything, and slept. We were up before sunrise, and the first thing to greet our vision as we looked over the parapet was the old regiment bivouacked out on the plain, only a few rods beyond.

It was a frightfully hot day yesterday and a number of the men were sunstruck. George Lawrence was one of the victims. Every one of the Seventeenth men gave out. We marched over the same road as a year ago, and several men were sunstruck at that time.

I saw Sam Newell yesterday—one of the boys who went from our company into the regulars. He said Perk. Lane was either killed or wounded and taken prisoner, in the fight at Beverly Ford. The last seen of him he was shot from his horse and surrounded by rebels. Nich. Biglin—our famous "Heenan"—has gone up to one of the gaps in the mountains, with the pioneers, to obstruct the roads against the rebels.

During our march night before last our whole division made one of the most ridiculous breaks on record. We were marching along the railroad when, at a highway crossing, a runaway horse bolted into the column. It got the right of way right there, and the men beyond, unable to see what the trouble was, got off the track without stopping to ask any questions. It went through the whole division like the tumble of a row of bricks, and the ditches, stumps and pitfalls made an awful mess of things.

There has just been a little excitement out in camp. Some of the men rushed a couple of sutlers' carts that were passing. One of the sutlers whipped up and managed to get away after a smart chase, but the other was not as fortunate. The raiders surrounded his cart and tipped it over, and would doubtless have robbed him of his stock but for a mounted officer who plunged into the crowd and put a stop to the lawless raid.

XCIV

Camp near Centreville, Va.,
June 18, 1863.

I HEARD, last night, that a mail was to go out this morning. I had an unfinished letter in my knapsack, but it was so dark I could not see to write; so I did it up just as it was and put it in the bag. They say we will get a mail before long, and then I shall expect enough accumulated reading matter to keep me busy for a while. Today is the hottest yet. I could not stand it in camp, so I went over and filled my canteen with cool, fresh water, gathered up my writing materials, and came down here into the shade of the bushes. Now I will tell you what we have been doing.

As I have written you, we got into Manassas about twelve o'clock

Monday night. We lay on the plains all day Tuesday, and drew three days' rations. The meat ration was salt pork only, but we were very glad to get that. I had the use of a fry-pan for a short time, sliced and fried the whole of my ration, and carefully packed it away in my haversack, convenient for transportation.

We turned in for a night's sleep, Monday, but didn't get it. An orderly came in about midnight, with orders, and the regiment was moved out about two miles on the Centreville road and deployed as pickets. I was on camp guard that night, and had not had a wink of sleep when we started. O, how sleepy I was! I actually fell asleep walking in the ranks, until I would wake myself by running into the man ahead of me. When the regiment was distributed as pickets, the camp guard detail was held in reserve, and had nothing to do but wait for something to turn up. I sat down without loosening a buckle of my equipments, leaned my back against a small tree, and was asleep on the instant. I slept perhaps a couple hours, and then woke up out of a nightmare. I dreamed I was in swimming and dove to the bottom, but when I tried to come up again it was no go. I kicked and struggled in vain. When at last I awoke I found I had slipped away from my tree and was lying with my head down hill, but so cumbered with my harness that I had hard work to straighten myself out again.

Wednesday morning the entire Fifth Corps passed us, and then our regiment marched down to Blackburn's Ford and waited for the division to come up. We got away from the Ford about three o'clock in the afternoon and marched three or four miles, to our present position about a mile out of Centreville on the old Bull Run road.

What I am suffering for now is a newspaper, so I can find out what is going on. I have not seen one since we left Washington.

Gum Springs, Va., *Sunday, June 21.*

We have made another hitch, about a dozen miles, and now find ourselves in this great Virginia metropolis, consisting of a meeting house, a cooper's shop, and half a dozen houses and hog pens, none in very good repair. We marched here day before yesterday, leaving Centreville after noon and arriving here before sunset. The fool camp story now being passed from mouth to mouth is that the corps

is now surrounded by the rebels. There can be no question, though, that there are any quantity of guerrillas lurking around, and a man outside the camp lines does well to keep his eye peeled. [This was Mosby's country.] It is said they picked up some thirty stragglers on the march up here. Yesterday they scooped in one of General Birney's aides and two of his orderlies. A couple of them made the mistake of their lives yesterday. The lieutenant-colonel of one of the New Jersey regiments with which we are now brigaded had dismounted and gone some distance from his horse, when he spied two innocent-looking "farmers," with shot-guns in their hands, coming the sneak act. At the proper moment they looked into the yawning muzzles of two six-shooters, with a very determined Yankee behind them, and didn't hesitate a moment in accepting his polite invitation to drop their guns and come along.

We had one of the heaviest rains I ever saw, Thursday afternoon. I did not have any tent pitched, but sat down on my knapsack, covered myself in with my rubber poncho and let her rain. It did much good by laying the dust for a few hours. That night there was a very large detail from our regiment, for picket, and my good luck kept me off the job. Charlie Parrott [killed, a few days later, at Gettysburg] was one of the detail, and I loaned him my poncho in exchange for his piece of shelter tent. That night several of us joined together and patched up a shelter with as many gable ends, almost, as there were pieces of tent. We made a very thick bed of leaves and bushes and managed to keep pretty dry and comfortable, notwithstanding there was a good deal of rain through the night.

We are camped in a very pretty location, on a little ridge with a railroad along its crest and a little creek at the foot. Just across the creek is the little hamlet of Gum Springs. There is a spring there with reputed medicinal qualities. Ed. Kenniston and I have pitched our tent in the shade of a mammoth persimmon tree.

There is a commotion now in that select corps familiarly known as "bummers," such as cooks, officers' waiters, &c. There is an order that every enlisted man shall tote a gun. This means that our kettles will be thrown away and every man be his own meat cook. But that won't make much change. We have been on a salt pork diet, almost exclusively, and every man has been privileged to fry, broil, or eat raw, according to his fancy.

The big guns are booming over towards the mountains, and in compliance with orders we have put ourselves in marching order—knapsacks packed, &c. But I have pulled my portfolio out to write a little more. We may move today, or we may not, but we are ready. Several prisoners have been brought in today—probably scouts or guerrillas. Our bands are playing all the time and making all the noise they can, possibly merely for their own amusement. The firing off to the west is growing heavier, and there is evidently a liveiy little fight on somewhere.

Monday Morning, June 22.

Late yesterday the long-expected mail came, and with the rest were two letters from you. We were formed in line, ready to march, when the mail was distributed, and as I looked down the ranks I could see many a man leaning on his gun and eagerly scanning his news from home. We didn't have a very long march—about six rods. The corps was placed in battle order ready to entertain company in case the Johnnies should see fit to honor us with a call.

I was on guard last night, but only had to stand one round, so got a good sleep. The mail goes out at ten o'clock this forenoon. I ran across an old friend the other day, in the Seventeenth Maine —George Parker, who once lived on the Corporation. I am pretty well supplied with meat now. When George Slade distributed the rations he saved me out an extra piece big enough for a good square meal. It pays to be all hunks with the cook.

XCV

Taneytown, Md., *June 29, 1863.*

I AM awful, awful tired; but we got a mail tonight, the first in some time, and as a mail goes out tomorrow morning I must write a few lines to let you know I am alive and well, but pretty well used up from the tremendous marches we have been making. We have been constantly on the move, tramping from sun rise to sun set, and sometimes far into the night; but we are now halted a little earlier in the day than usual, within five miles of the Pennsylvania line. There is much I would like to write, but as it is almost dark now I must wait until we get into camp for a day or two, if we ever do. Good night! Send me a few stamps.

XCVI

TANEYTOWN, MD., *June 30, 1863.*

MY NOTE of last evening will let you know I am still alive. As there are no signs as yet of an immediate movement, I will commence a letter, not knowing when I will have a chance to finish or to send it. The Second Regiment, in company with two other regiments, left Gum Springs on the afternoon of Wednesday, the 24th, marched out about three miles on the Leesburg road, camped, and threw out patrols on the road and in the neighborhood. The boys foraged about and brought in an unusual abundance of fresh meat of all kinds. As for myself, I not only gorged at supper, but had my haversack loaded when we started in the morning. There was a house close to camp, occupied, so far as we could see, only by two solitary women. Some of the boys discovered a great quantity of bacon in storage—enough, in fact, for a small army. They intimated to the women that it looked very much as if they had unearthed a guerrilla base of supplies. It probably was a good guess, and the women were very much frightened. But our men wanted that bacon, and a business arrangement was concluded under which the women were paid a fair price for it in good Yankee money.

Thursday forenoon the whole corps marched past us and we fell in and brought up the rear of the column. That was a hard day's march. Late in the afternoon we reached the Potomac at Edwards' Ferry. There were three pontoon bridges over the river, on which we crossed over into Maryland. As it was near night and raining we expected to halt somewhere near the ferry. But we were not permitted even to cross the canal to the turnpike beyond. Instead, were switched onto the towpath of the Ohio and Chesapeake Canal, heading up stream. The night settled down, dark and gloomy, but no halt or rest. There was no place for either. The path was but a mule track with the canal on one side and the river on the other. Occasionally there was a little point or elbow of land on the river side. Then the rain came, and we were soaked. The towpath became muddy and slippery. The men had not had a chance since morning to cook coffee. By ten o'clock there was no organization left. The division was a straggling, swearing, disgusted mob. The men "went into camp" whenever and wherever they could find a

place big enough to lie down on. I dug along until I was all in. I slid down the bank to the river's edge, along with Jess. Dewey and Joe Gleason, and camped down on a pile of brush. Jess. was a fair example of the utter demoralization. He was the color-sergeant and had the regimental colors with him. "Anybody that wants to carry the flag can have it," he said, "but I won't lug it another inch." The rain was pouring, and all I could do was to cover myself with my piece of shelter tent and take what came. I had lost my good old rubber poncho at Edwards' Ferry—sat down on it while waiting a passage, and forgot to pick it up when I started for the bridge.

Friday morning we cooked coffee, had a good breakfast, and started up the towpath again. There was no chance to get out of the trap till we got to Monocacy Bridge, fifteen miles from Edwards' Ferry. There the General—who probably has learned something about driving cattle—collected his command as they came straggling along for hours. We camped, that night, about a mile from Point of Rocks. I had a share in a big fire of fence rails, and made up in a great measure for the discomforts of the previous night. Had a great warming up and drying out, hung my boots before the fire, got into my reserve pair of stockings, and slept soundly and restfully.

Saturday we marched through a very rough, broken country. We passed through one village—Jefferson. South Mountain, where the battle was fought last fall, was in sight all day. At night I was detailed for brigade camp guard. The brilliant idea of a camp guard in that place was conceived by the colonel of the Ninth New Jersey, commanding the brigade. It was about as much use as a second tail for a cat. I felt that I had done enough marching for one day, so when I was posted I laid down where I could watch my beat and, of course, went to sleep. I didn't wake up until "Curley" Converse, on the next beat, shook me and told me the relief was falling in. I was greatly relieved, on looking around, to find that nobody had run away with the camp in my absence.

When we started out Sunday morning we were assured we were going only nine miles—to Frederick City. We marched to that place on a splendid turnpike, over a mountain with an unpronounceable name, and arrived in good season. We found quite a town, old and quaint, largely built of brick. But we did not stop according

to the advertised schedule. We pushed on and on until we had passed through Walkerville, about eight miles beyond. The first thing on getting into camp, we were ordered not to take any fence rails, as wood would be hauled to us. It was late, and we couldn't wait the arrival of wood teams, in which we didn't take much stock anyway. But the men were sparing in their use of rails. It didn't take many to cook our coffee and keep all the campfires we needed.

Yesterday morning we started again, early, and marched to this place, which is, I should judge, about fifteen miles from Walkerville. We are now in a country where the people are our friends, and where the Old Flag and cheers for the Union are the rule and not the exception. We can buy about anything we want in the grub line, as the country has not been ravaged and plundered by the armies. I have just had a good meal of home-made bread, right out of the oven, with delicious butter. The butter was a streak of luck for me. Strolling off a little ways into the country, I saw a swarm of men from various regiments at one of those stone spring-houses which answer the purpose of an ice-box in this country. An old lady was peddling out her stock of butter in pound pats, and there were a dozen hands reaching for every ball. Being a late arrival and on the outskirts, it didn't look as if I was in the game. But I was. The old lady held the last ball in her hand. There was a wild competition for that. "No!" she said, decidedly, "this belongs to a gentleman over there; I promised him he should have one, sure." "Thank you, ma'am!" I called out, "I knew you wouldn't forget me!" and I reached over half a dozen heads, got the butter, passed over a quarter, and struck for camp.

Just now, old Dan. Desmond is assuring me, "By cripes, Mart., ye've saved me life." And I don't know but what I have. The old man was off his feed and flat on his back, in almost complete collapse, when I sailed forth. I divided my plunder of fresh bread and butter with him, and he ate ravenously, and in a little while was on his feet, bright and chipper. He got just the medicine he needed.

The talk is that we are not going farther today. We hope it is so, for we need rest badly. Today I took all your letters from my knapsack and fed them to the flames. Several times I have come near losing my knapsack and all it contained. I have a bad toothache and am afraid of neuralgia.

General Sickles returned to the corps yesterday, and the men are giving him the credit for the long rest we are enjoying. Birney and Humphrey are not as careful of the men as Sickles. The wish is perhaps father to the thought, but the report is that Humphrey has been censured or disciplined in some way for that towpath scrape. We saw General Marston in Frederick and cheered him heartily. The sun is out and we have orders to pack for a march.

XCVII

Gettysburg, Pa., *July 4, 1863.*

I WRITE on the blank pages of an orderly's book, which George Slade picked up. It is the only paper I have, as I lost my knapsack and all its contents in the battle day before yesterday. Our corps was engaged that day, and the Second Regiment was in the very fiercest of the fight and met its heaviest loss yet in any one battle. About two hundred are gone out of our little regiment, but, as usual, I came through all right. I don't know now how I did it. While we lay supporting a battery, before we had fired a shot, one shell burst right in my group. The man who touched me on the right [Jonathan Merrill] had his thigh cut away, and the two at my left [Lyndon B. Woods and Sergeant James M. House] were very severely wounded—and I never had a scratch. Talk about luck! A little while after, we charged to save the battery, and it was a wild time. As many of our wounded were left in the hands of the rebels, no accurate list can be made now. Charlie Vickery and a Seventeenth man in my company are killed. [Vickery did not die until the 11th.] Joe Hubbard, Lieutenant Dascomb, Frank Chase and Johnny Barker are among the killed. [Barker recovered from his terrible wound and lived many years with a trephined skull.] Ed. Kenniston was shot through both legs. I blundered onto him in the field hospital near where we bivouacked. He was lying by a stone wall, in a field packed with wounded men. He had lost everything but the bloody clothes he wore. I fixed him up with what I had left—filled my canteen with water and laid beside him, with my haversack, in which there happened to be a few really tasty

pieces of grub.* Ed. wants father to go down and tell his folks it is only a flesh wound, and with a little assistance he will be able to stand on his feet.

George Slade wants me to send you this wayside rose that he picked on the battlefield. The Johnny who had the overhauling of my knapsack got a fine picture of a certain black-eyed Yankee girl, but he didn't have the reading of any of her letters.

A shell burst right on our colors, early in the action, breaking the staff into three pieces. The batteries were so close together, some of them, that they threw grape at each other. I never was under such an artillery fire. Gen. Sickles lost a leg.

There was a great fight yesterday, but not over the same ground as the day before. The rebels made a tremendous effort to smash our lines [Pickett's charge,] but were thrown back in great disorder and leaving a great many prisoners in our hands. We were not in it, simply because they didn't happen to hit the part of the line we were holding, but struck a little to our right. Today we are waiting for something to turn up. Out to our front the skirmishers are industriously popping away, but it is a little early for the real business. Before night, somewhere along the line, we will probably have a real old-fashioned Fourth of July celebration, with plenty of fireworks. The armies are holding practically the same lines we started in on here, but the advantage is surely with us.

Our new recruits stood up to their work like men—none did better. I cannot write more now, but when this fight is over and I can get my hands on some writing paper, I'll try to do better.

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*Many, many years afterward, Ed. came from Dayton, Ohio—where he was an inmate of the National Military Home—to the Weirs reunion, especially "to see Mart. Haynes." There, in the Second Regiment house, he told to an interested audience the story of his being wounded and of being discovered and relieved by me, substantially as given in my letter, but with greater elaboration and detail. And he closed with a climax which I had omitted in my letter and in the long lapse of years had all but forgotten. "Then Mart. said, 'Ed., it's going to rain, and you are in no shape to lay out without any cover. I've lost my whole outfit, but I'll see if I can't pick up something for you.' And he went off, and in half an hour he came back. He said, 'Don't ask any questions, Ed.' And he covered me up with an officer's overcoat—a splendid garment, heavily braided—tucked me in, and made me comfortable. I honestly believe he saved my life." I loathe a thief, but I am glad I stole that overcoat.

JESSE DEWEY

XCVIII

Camp near Boonsboro, Md., *July 11, 1863.*

KNOWING how anxious you must be to hear from me, and having a little spare time on my hands, I have traded a postage stamp for a sheet of paper and an envelope, and here I am. We have been doing some pretty tall marching since I last wrote. The rebels retreated from Gettysburg, leaving their dead unburied and thousands of their wounded as prisoners. Our army started at once in pursuit, our corps being, I think, the last to get away. I had ample time to go, at my leisure, over a good part of the field. And I got rid of that toothache that I told you about. For two or three days I wasn't thinking much about my teeth. But when the strain was off a little, it all came back, and at last I got simply wild. Bill Stark [hospital steward] gave me some powder—morphine, I think—to tuck in, but I might as well have used so much flour. Our surgeons said they didn't have a pair of forceps in their entire kit that they could tackle that tooth with. So I started out to find somebody that had. I had determined, if necessary, to go into Gettysburg, or even to Baltimore, to find a tooth-puller. The surgeon of one of the New Jersey regiments was my Good Samaritan. He was all packed up, ready for a start, but he overhauled a mule's load, dug out some forceps that looked like a pair of tongs, seated me on a cracker box, and fastened on. That was the only time, in my experience, that it really felt good to have a tooth pulled.

Our corps left Gettysburg at two o'clock on the morning of July 7th, and now we are lying out here, somewhere within a thousand miles of Boonsboro, they say. Since the battle we have had reinforcements enough to organize a third division, and it is said to be larger than the other two combined. We are being hustled around pretty lively, and are likely to be rushed off in any direction at any moment. Last night we went into camp on Antietam battlefield, and I had just got to sleep when we were tumbled out and started off again. I marched and marched and marched, until I was completely fagged out. Then Jess. Dewey and I turned in by the side of the road, slept soundly and comfortably until morning, then raced on and caught up with the regiment. Just at this immediate time Company I is a little topheavy. Herm. Sleeper and I are the only

privates on duty, with five non-commissioned officers. The rest are used up and camped along the roadside, or in hospitals. The Army of the Potomac is doing some great marching and is in good spirits for a fight. We are sorry to lose General Sickles. He is very popular with the Third Corps, being very considerate in marching the men. Right or wrong, the average estimate of Birney is that he classes his men along with his horses and mules.

I do a little foraging now, but not as much as when in Virginia. But I pay for everything I get here, except apples and plums, while in Virginia I enforce the principle of confiscation. I have fried apples about every day. I got a pound of splendid butter yesterday for twenty-five cents, and once in a while I get a loaf of bread, some biscuits, or a pie.

Jess. Dewey and I have made a calculation, and find that since leaving Falmouth we have footed it about three hundred miles. My load was materially reduced by the loss of my knapsack. I picked up another one, but all I am carrying in it just now is a single piece of shelter-tent cloth. One of the bummers attached to the regiment found a box in a ditch, at Emmitsburg, containing two hundred dollars, mostly in gold. [The finder was a disreputable camp follower familiarly known as "Culpepper"—the brother of one of our officers—and there is reason to believe that his loot was the poor-box of the convent at Emmitsburg.]

XCIX

Camp near Sharpsburg, Md., *July 15, 1863.*

WE ARE now lying in camp with a promise of remaining all day. Not a word have I had from you for many a day. We move so often and travel so fast that we cannot complain if the mail wagon doesn't catch up with us. The rebels have escaped across the river out of the net we boys fondly hoped had been thrown around their army, and now we are anticipating another series of hard marches. Yesterday morning our skirmishers advanced upon the rebel positions and found them abandoned and the rebels across the river. This morning the Thirds Corps started at six o'clock and marched until two in the afternoon with but one halt of a very few minutes for rest. You can be sure the man and

horse who set the pace at the head of the column came in for the usual amount of cussing. The day, although cloudy, was very hot, and the road was lined with stragglers.

We came pretty near having a wild riot here this afternoon. We were no sooner in camp than a sutler pitched his tent close by and opened up for trade. Pretty soon there was a big crowd around his establishment, and some of the lawless began to steal and pilfer. He very naturally tried to protect his property, and soon there was a wild tumult. It looked as if the guard that had been posted would have their hands full to save any part of his gingersnaps and cheese. The major of the Sixth New York Heavy Artillery, a young bud with shoulder-straps as big as a barn door, rushed down from their camp, near by, and made himself conspicuous. His regiment had never seen active service, having done garrison duty at Baltimore and Harper's Ferry, and when he ordered the dirty old fighting men to go to their regiments it was like waving a red flag before a bull. One of our small boys—a camp follower—told him to go to H—ot Place. The major made a reach for the boy and missed connection, then foolishly chased him into our camp, and caught him. Then somebody knocked the major down, and somebody else picked him up and pitched him out of camp. In a few minutes his regiment was seen to be falling in, under arms, whereupon the Sixth New Jersey bugles sounded the "Assembly," and every other bugle in the brigade caught up the call. Just at this time General French came tearing up, who listened to the major's story and bluffly told him he had no business or authority in that camp—and that was the end of it.

We passed over Antietam battleground today—where Hooker fought, and the bridge Burnside carried by a charge. I have a rebel roundabout, cartridge box, and plate with letters "C S" on it. I inclose an Indian arrow head I picked up in the road. It rains almost every day now, and we must go to work pretty soon and put up our shelter. Jess. Dewey, Bill Pendleton and I are hitching up together just now.

C

Camp at Ashby's Gap, Va., *July 21, 1863.*

CAME up to this place yesterday, and may stay here two or three days, as it is quite an important position just at the present time. On the one hand is the little village of Upperville, now devastated and dilapidated; on the other hand is Ashby's Gap, a pass through the Blue Ridge. We are camped in fields on the slope of a mountain, from which point there is a broad view of the country far to the east. The bleached skeletons of horses tell of fierce cavalry fights, at various times, for the possession of the gap; and close to our camp are four fresh graves of men killed in Stahl's fight with Stuart. It is a country of wornout land nourishing a big crop of blackberry bushes. No sooner are arms stacked than the men make a break for blackberries, and even an army can hardly make any impression on the supply.

You will probably see Steve Smiley at home before long. Three commissioned officers and six enlisted men from each regiment are going home to drill the drafted men, and Steve expects to be one of the detail from this regiment. Perhaps I will send this letter out by him. Our mail is a very uncertain factor, both coming and going, judging from the fact that you had not heard from me a week after the battle. But as my name was not in the killed and wounded list you were probably not much worried. We are drawing nice ham for a meat ration now. I found a lot of little onions in a deserted garden yesterday.

Four of our wounded officers have died in the hospitals. Charlie Vickery was shot through the back, injuring his spine. The rebels robbed him of everything he had. A rebel major came along, asked him some questions, then ordered some rebel soldiers to carry him to a barn near by and leave a canteen of water with him. The next day this barn was in the line of fire, and he was wounded again, slightly, in the shoulder by a grapeshot. When our men got possession of that part of the field he was carried to one of our hospitals, where he died on the 11th. He would not believe he had got to die, and did not send a word to his wife; but after he became speechless he tried to whisper something to one of the boys, but could not make himself understood.

We crossed the Potomac at Harper's Ferry on the 11th. I have seen some wild places, but never any to beat this. Two rivers here unite, rushing down between towering perpendicular cliffs, with only room for a road between cliff and river. This is the second anniversary of the battle of Bull Run. Two years ago this very minute I was making good time toward Centreville. And here I am, only one day's march away, and still on the job. But we will win.

CI

Washington, D. C., *July 28, 1863.*

SUDDENLY and unexpectedly, after all our troubles and tribulations, the Second Regiment finds itself in clover. Day before yesterday we were marching through Warrenton, sweating and puffing, when we saw General Marston standing in front of one of the houses and looking mighty pleasant and smiling. Pretty soon it was passed along that he was up there to get the Second, Fifth and Twelfth regiments for the formation of a New Hampshire brigade to serve under him in his new department on the lower Potomac. It seemed too good to be true; but when, after our next rest, the corps marched on and left us, it began to look as if there was something in the story, after all. Then we marched back to Warrenton and camped by General Meade's headquarters until yesterday morning, when, about ten o'clock, we loaded onto a train of flat-cars, and at nine o'clock last evening we arrived in Alexandria. After waiting over two hours for cars to bring us up to Washington, we "huffed it" about half way to Long Bridge and bivouacked until morning, then continued on, took possession of the "Soldiers' Rest," and are waiting for orders.

General Marston's department, I understand, is to be called the "Department of St. Mary's," and will take in St. Mary's county, in Maryland. It is on the lower Potomac, and probably a depot for prisoners of war will be established, the guarding of which, with the prevention of smuggling, will comprise our duties. This will be an agreeable change from the past few weeks—to be in a settled camp, no more long marches, mail and rations regular, a chance to bathe, fish, and have a good time on the water. We expect to stay in

Washington a few days, though, until we can get new clothing, and perhaps be paid off. I shall lay in fish lines and hooks among my prime necessities.

Now I will go back and tell you what else we have been doing since I wrote last. Last Wednesday, the 22d, the Third Corps left Ashby's Gap and reached a little railroad station called Piedmont, and the following morning marched to Manassas Gap. This pass is about five miles long, and when we got there the rebels held one end and our folks the other. Our cavalry had been skirmishing with the enemy for three days, and this day we moved in and took our turn. The fight commenced early in the afternoon. The rebels had a strong position along the crest of a high hill or ridge [Wapping Heights] that blocked the western end of the gap. For a time our brigade lay massed on the lower slope of an opposite hill and watched the preparations. And when the movement started there was something about it that reminded me of some of the "dioramas" you and I have seen in Manchester. There was the steep hillside, with the long line of blue dots—our skirmishers—crawling up and up, and the solid blue lines of the supporting regiments not very far behind. The height was soon carried, and we pushed on beyond, our brigade two hundred yards in rear of the Excelsior Brigade, which we followed and supported.

The Excelsiors made one charge, and it was a hustler. They and the rebels were facing each other across a deep, rocky gulch. The Excelsiors charged down through this with a yell. Colonel Farnham, of the Second Excelsior, and Gen. Spinola dashed ahead of everything, on their horses, and took two rebel sharpshooters prisoners, although Spinola was badly wounded. Farnham was the captain of the slave ship "Wanderer," which was the cause of so much excitement a few years ago. By this day's work the rebels were cleared entirely out of the gap.

The next morning our division advanced into the Shenandoah valley, the entire Second Regiment being deployed as skirmishers in advance of the column. We had not gone thirty rods when, on coming into the road, I came upon the sprawling form of one poor Johnny who had met his fate the previous day. He was apparently fighting in the shelter of a sunken road, when a bullet pierced his brain and he rolled down the bank to the roadbed. The cartridges

were scattered from his open cartridge-box, and picking one up I noted it was of peculiar construction. None of us have ever seen one like it before. The paper is set firmly in the base of the bullet, so all one has to do in loading is to break the two apart with his fingers, pour his powder and ram his bullet home. It is the toothless man's sure-pop cartridge fast enough. [I still have it among my war relics.] We advanced clear to Front Royal without any serious opposition, then rallied on the colors, about-faced and marched back to the gap.

I intend to carry this letter down to the post-office myself, so you will be pretty sure to get it. Hen. Everett is going down before long and I will wind up so as to go along with him.

CII

Point Lookout, Lower Potomac, Md.,
August 1, 1863.

WE HAVE a mail at last, and I was fortunate enough to get *four* letters from you. Now that we are here, it looks as if I would not have much of anything to do except to write letters. We got here yesterday forenoon, and are now fairly well settled. We are camped close to the beach, on smooth, level ground. We have A-tents and a plenty of them, so we are not crowded for room. Dan. Desmond and I have a tent all to ourselves. Jess. Dewey is acting orderly-sergeant, so he has his own tent.

Afternoon.—I was called away rather suddenly this morning, to go on guard. Now, coming back to the guard headquarters from dinner, I have brought my writing materials along, so as to finish my letter today. Talking of comfort! I am sitting in the shade of big pine trees, within two rods of the shore of Chesapeake Bay, a delicious breeze blowing from the water and the waves rolling up on the beach. [This was at General Marston's headquarters.] The first thing this morning, when reveille was blown, nearly every man in the regiment made a dash for the water, for a plunge and a swim. This was a fashionable summer resort before the war. The waters abound in crabs, and the boys have already got to catching them. When I was up to camp this noon one of the boys had a kettleful

on boiling. We had a ration of "salt horse" [corned beef] today—the first we have had since leaving Washington for Falmouth. It seemed like an old friend.

On the steamer, coming down, I had a long chat with one of the batch of prisoners we were taking along. He was a native of Alexandria, and on the way down the river he pointed out the places where he had been for a good time before the war. We had been in the same fights, quite a number, and it was very interesting to compare notes. The day we left Washington I was on guard at the gate, and there was a flock of secesh women there to bid good bye to friends and give them things to eat or wear. Among the prisoners was an Irishman who formerly lived in Manchester. I recognized him as soon as I saw him. He was down south when the war broke out, and was forced into the army. He fell out on the march on purpose to be taken and is very anxious to take the oath of allegiance, as are many others, especially the foreigners.

CIII

Point Lookout, Md., *August 4, 1863.*

THIS forenoon "Curley" Converse and I went out to a creek near camp, hunting for oysters. We found and shucked till we had three pints of solid meats. There were lots of crabs there, some almost as big as lobsters, and I soon found out that a crab is a very pugnacious animal. I ran across one in shoal water hardly deep enough to cover my feet, and playfully tapped him with my knife, just to see him run. He ran. So did I, for I was barefooted and he made straight for my toes, with the water boiling. Soon I encountered another, and just to make sure, I rapped him. He came on like the other; but there was no surprise this time, and I speared him with my knife. The boys bring in bushels of them, and they are excellent eating—as good as lobsters.

George Slade has not been with us for some time, but we expect he will join us soon. [We did not know it then, but he was in fact a prisoner, having been picked up by the rebels somewhere below Harper's Ferry. He never got back to the regiment, but died at Camp Parole.]

CIV

Point Lookout, Md., *August 8, 1863.*

ED. BAILEY'S FATHER came down here night before last and is going to be regimental sutler, so they say. There is some pretty sharp talk by some of the Manchester men, who affirm that he would be more at home as sutler for a rebel regiment. I do not know, but I guess we can balance the colonel's good services against his father's political shortcomings.

You ask me to tell you about Steve Palmer and —— ——. So the story has got to Manchester, has it? These are the facts: On the first day's march from Falmouth Steve had some whiskey in his wagon, which he was selling to those who wanted the stuff. —— was officer of the guard that day. He went to Steve and Steve gave him a drink. Then he brought a canteen to Steve and said: "Here, Steve, let me have some whiskey in this canteen and I will pay you when I get some money." Steve let him have it, and he went directly to the colonel and reported Steve for selling whiskey. Steve was at once taken from his wagon and put into the ranks, and at Gettysburg was very badly wounded, and if he lives will be a cripple for life. [He died of his wounds.] The affair, naturally, has created a good deal of feeling. Steve did wrong in taking liquor upon his team to sell; but there was an element of treachery in what —— did that I wouldn't want charged up to my credit.

We are living pretty well now, for army rations. Here is our bill of fare for the past three days:

Wednesday: Breakfast—Baked Beans, Coffee. Dinner—Beefsteak. Supper—Coffee.

Thursday: Breakfast—Potatoes, Boiled Pork, Boiled Fresh Beef, Boiled Salt Beef, Coffee. Dinner—Soup, Parsley Greens. Supper—Coffee.

Friday: Breakfast—Potatoes, Boiled Beef, Coffee. Dinner—Boiled Dish of Potatoes and Parsley Greens.

In addition, we have, each day, a loaf of "soft tack," baked here on the Point, and occasionally a ration of molasses. We call that high living. And Company I is going to have something extra for dinner today—roast beef and potatoes. The beef is roasting in two Dutch ovens.

A big school of porpoises went up the river yesterday. They came so near in shore that some of the boys fired at them, and I should judge hit some, from the commotion that was created and the way they dug away from shore. Ed. Bailey and I struck up the beach for an old boat that lay there, in which to get out and have a crack at them. The colonel had a carbine and an old stocking full of cartridges, and I picked up an ancient oar. We got the craft afloat and I paddled it out quite a piece. But the waves ran high and the water poured through the boat in a dozen places, until it was a question of pull about or swim for it. So we put about and got ashore before the old tub sank. Sixteen of us took a sail out to the mouth of the river two or three days ago. It was very rough and the boat was terribly overloaded, and it was only by good seamanship that we saved ourselves from going under.

I have just run across another Manchester fellow—James, who used to be City Messenger. He is with the Twelfth Regiment sutler.

Now I must tell you the story of Bill Ramsdell, for it is decidedly interesting, although rather rough on Bill. A short time after we came on from New Hampshire Bill went to Concord and reported to Major Whittlesey. Well, no sooner has he reported than he goes away again and is not seen about Concord for two or three days, when he again reports; but this time the major puts him under arrest as a deserter, and when the squad of deserters leave New Hampshire under a guard of convalescents Bill is packed off with the rest. They go to Boston and stop at Fort Warren for a time, and while there the prisoners are put to all sorts of menial work. Part of the time Bill was haying on the parapet, which was not at all bad, but after that he was given a mule's job, hauling coal. A dozen of the prisoners would load a cart, hitch on and drag it along, dump their load, and so on. All this I learned from George Cilley, who was left in New Hampshire, sick, and who was guarding prisoners three or four weeks. He said Bill took it all very philosophically—he couldn't help himself. He is now in Washington and will probably be sent to the regiment before long.

The guard duty is divided now so that we do it one week and the Twelfth the next. During our week every man is on guard every other day, but we are not overworked, as we have no drilling to do.

My tentmate, Dan. Desmond, is one of the quaintest old Irishmen you ever met. He loads me with his adventures and experiences until my ribs fairly ache from the laughing. Every night he regales me with some story—and a good one—to go to bed on.

The Seventeenth fellows will be discharged within a few days. Two in my company have died in the service—Tibbetts, killed at Gettysburg, and Ingalls, died of disease.

The laugh is on Steve Smiley, and it is too good to keep. The day we came down from Washington Steve ran down to some place on the street to get some papers—I don't know just what. But he didn't get them, because the colonel had been there before him. On his way back to the barracks—only a little ways—he ran into the provost guard, and as he had no pass they gathered him in and chucked him into the central guard house, where they kept him over night. The next morning they let him out and he got on a boat and came down. He is pretty touchy about it, and the boys like to thorn him about patronizing the "Central Hotel."

The boys catch some nice fish here, among which are sea trout, which the natives tell us will be very plenty in a short time. There is a big kettle of beans on the fire, parboiling, which will be ready baked for breakfast. You see I have to keep bringing up grub matters; but it does seem good to have a plenty.

CV

Point Lookout, Md., *August 10. 1863.*

I WANT something to do, and so "I take my pen in hand," &c. And yet, after all, I have been pretty busy this forenoon. We had to move our tents so as to give the officers more breathing room —delicate souls! Then I went out and did my week's washing in a skillful and artistic manner. When that was "hung out" I watched the operations of a pile driver. We are to have a sink way out over the river, and the piles for its support are being driven into the sand.

The toads here! Their number is legion, of all sizes and conditions. There is the very best of understandings between them and the boys, for they are our dependable fly-traps. The men

drive them into the tents rather than out. I am fairly in love with some of the bright-eyed little fellows that are tentmates of mine. They sit so demure and still until a fly comes within reach, when there is the flash of a tongue, and one less fly to plague us. Long live the toads, and may they multiply and increase at Point Lookout.

We had another instalment of rebel prisoners yesterday, five hundred coming down from Washington. I could not help noticing the feeling between the men from North Carolina and those from the Gulf States. On their arrival here the prisoners were formed into companies of one hundred men each, and as far as practicable those from the same state were put together. There were not quite enough North Carolinians for a company, so some Mississippians were put in with them, who began at once to berate their new messmates, twitting them of being unpatriotic, and telling the guard that those fellows wanted to get back into the Union.

Dan. and I are going to fix up our tent. First, we will raise it up a few inches, so as to give the air a chance to circulate under the bottom. Then we will build a couple of nice bunks, one on each side, and between the heads of the bunks a table just big enough to eat and write on.

Tuesday Evening, August 11.

I have been on fatigue duty today. This forenoon I was digging a hole on the beach in which to set a pile post, and this afternoon I helped pitch some tents for the adjutant. About half a dozen of our boys came down on the boat yesterday, some of whom had been in the convalescent camps, or in the distributing camps at Alexandria, ever since the regiment left Washington for the front. But George Slade was not among them, and now I am wondering what has become of him and where he can be.

Company I had fried fish both for breakfast and dinner today. They were fine sea bass, brought in last night by a fisherman in his boat. He had an iron bucket full of blazing pitchwood for a light, and his two little bareheaded children were with him—a boy and a girl five or six years old. They were very pretty, fair-haired, and their appetites evidently had not been spoiled by indulgence, for their father cut slices from a huge loaf of bread in his basket, which they put out of the way, clear, as fast as their little jaws could work.

Well, my boy Dan. has made up the bed and gone to bed, and I guess I will follow suit.

Wednesday Evening, August 12.

I made a great discovery today—nothing less than a newspaper in this out-of-the-way place. It is named *Hammond Gazette*, and is published for the benefit of the sick and wounded in the Hammond General Hospital. It is a little fellow, just the size of *The Literary Visitor* that George Batchelder and I used to print. This afternoon I went down and hunted up the office, along with old printer Smith of the Twelfth—familiarly known in Manchester as "Snuffy" Smith. We found quite a neat little office, with a real sociable Vermont printer running the establishment.

About the middle of the forenoon we had a wild gale here, coming off the bay, and the river was full of vessels fleeing to shelter under the Point. Desmond and I went out this evening and brought in a couple boards, which we have cut up into length for bunks; but as we have yet to make a raise on some nails, we will use them tonight for a floor, and I guess we will need one, for it looks as if we were going to have a great shower.

Thursday Morning, August 13.

Last night we had a holy terror of a storm. The wind blew almost a hurricane, the water was a continuous deluge, and the thunder and lightning were terrific. Many of the tents went down, but ours stood up nobly. Those boards of ours were a perfect godsend, as a brook of no mean proportions ran through our tent, and we were perched above it, high if not dry. Jess. Dewey's tent was one of those that blew over, and everything in it got thoroughly soaked. I thought, at one time, ours would have to go. It must have been a sight, Dan. and I each hugging a tent-pole and holding it down for dear life.

CVI

Point Lookout, Md., *August 18, 1863.*

I WAS terribly provoked this evening. I had just got comfortably settled down to write a letter when I was ordered out on a detail. I soon found it was to load boards, at the wharf, for the sutler. As I was on guard last night, and going on again tomorrow, it looked to me very much like crowding the mourners; and more

than that, I did not like being ordered out to do work they have no right to put on a soldier anyway; but to keep peace in the family I went and did the work, and now, at ten o'clock, I have got back to my letter. I have been very busy today, and have something to show for it. Dan and I got hold of some more boards and immediately proceeded to build a palace. We have a good one, the walls four feet high with our big tent perched on top, a bunk on each side, a table, and lots of spare room, not to mention a well-fitted board floor.

We have an addition to our company in the shape of a contraband who come across from Virginia in a little dugout canoe the other night. We took him in to the cook, and he is earning his keep.

Wednesday Morning, August 19.

We are getting quite a gathering of prisoners here. Several hundred arrived yesterday. The increasing force of prisoners calls for extra vigilance on our part. We now have two Dahlgren boat howitzers posted so as to command the rebel camp, and are going to have four more. The rebels are set to do their own work—to dig wells, build cook houses, &c. In such a crowd you will always find a proportion of smarties, and a few of the lordly ones kicked up a rumpus and swore they would not do any work for the United States. They changed their mind when they were strung up without any parley, and the joke of the thing was that a good many of the prisoners were tickled to death to see them disciplined.

Did you ever know Sam. Newell? He was one of the squad that enlisted from our company into the regular cavalry last fall. When we were in Washington on our way down here, he came on from the front with a lot of dismounted cavalrymen, and when we came down here he simply got homesick. So he got on board the boat and came along with us. This was nothing more nor less than desertion, and he was arrested here and put under guard. But one fine morning Samuel turns up missing and is not heard from again for several days, when he appears at the guard house under full military escort and is again in the toils and more carefully guarded than before. When he ran away he went up country about forty miles and let himself to work in a sawmill. The owner has a schooner on which he ships wood down here to the Point, and the next trip he made

Sam. came along to help work the boat. He kept pretty shady while they were unloading here, but one of our officers got his eye on him and Sam was ingloriously dragged out of his hole. I guess most of those fellows who went into the cavalry wish they had stayed with the old Second. They missed that long furlough at home, and life with the regulars is not like soldiering with your own crowd of old-time friends and acquaintances.

CVII

Point Lookout, Md., *August 22, 1863.*

IRENE [Mrs. Wasley,] Mrs. Col. Carr and some other women came down on the boat day before yesterday. I got the little bundle, ate the cakes, enjoyed your cooking, and was delighted with the fine towel. We now have four or five times as many prisoners here as there are men to guard them. I put a picture in the mail today. It will look quite pretty framed, but I value it most as a record up to date of the boys of Company I. I only wish the copy had been prepared by some one a little more accustomed to that sort of work.

CVIII

Point Lookout, Md., *August 26, 1863.*

HAVE just been up to see Mrs. Irene Stokes Wasley, and she had lots to tell me about you—so much she almost made me homesick. Mrs. Bailey came down on the boat Monday evening, and we catch a glimpse of her and the colonel parading. Dan expresses the opinion that they are a mighty wee bit of a couple.

The other night, while I was on guard at Marston's headquarters, we had a queer lot there under guard. There were fifteen men who said they had run away from Richmond to escape conscription. Some of them would not take the oath of allegiance, and it is said they will be returned to their friends—sent across and landed on the Virginia shore. They were mostly Irishmen and Jews, and it was the Irishmen who were willing to take the oath.

Now I must tell you of one of the meanest little skunks that ever lived. He is a brother of our second lieutenant. He is familiarly known as "Culpepper," and the boys hate him devotedly. He is not enlisted, but ran away from the Reform School and came on with us. He is one of the most incorrigable little thieves that ever was. On the march through Maryland, while we were camped for a little while near Emmitsburg, he had a large sum of money which he pretended to have found in a box in a ditch, but which some of the boys now believe was stolen from the poor box of the convent there. Be that as it may, he has been engaged in two or three bad scrapes here which should furnish sufficient cause for having him arrested or sent home. His latest exploit was to crawl into the house of a man named Murphy, near the camp. He got in through a window, and Mrs. Murphy came in and caught him rummaging her bureau. She grabbed him, but he fought and scratched and bit until he got away, and now he is roaming around as big as ever, notwithstanding Mrs. Murphy declares several dollars in money are missing. The young scoundrel says he knocked a bag in at the window and climbed in to get it. His brother pretends to believe he is innocent, and shields him.

We are going in for improvements here, just as they do in other enterprising cities. A brick oven is being built which will take in a pile of beans, meat or bread. Bill Summers, our company cook, is the architect and mason; the next company's cook is the tender. Clay is used for mortar, and where the bricks come from is one of the company secrets. Another job that it has taken all day to accomplish is the raising of a flag staff, eighty feet high, on the parade ground in front of the regiment.

Evening.—Dan. and I have just risen in our wrath and put an end to—well, I won't try to tell how many millions of flies. By the judicious application of a couple of towels we wiped cartloads of them from the face of the earth. If any escaped to tell the tale, some fly historian will record August 26 as the fateful day when a wild Irishman and a crazy Yankee ran amuck at Point Lookout. Now Dan. is reading, in peace, an account of the operations at Charleston, the knocking to pieces of Fort Sumter, and wishing we could take the cussed city.

CIX

Point Lookout, Md., *September 3, 1863.*

GUARD DUTY has been pretty strenuous for a time—every other day, but with three reliefs. Now, however, the prison camp has been extended, doubling the number of posts around it, and we are put to it to find men enough to make two reliefs—the men being on post twelve hours out of twenty-four, every other day. Monday I marched a beat three hours at one time, and over four hours at another. But Marston has taken the matter in hand and ordered up reinforcements—that is, he has ordered that every man in these two regiments shall take a gun. All officers' waiters and other bummers are to be returned to their companies for duty and their places filled by contrabands. If carried out it will help us out some. Yesterday I had a very pleasant tour of duty, being on picket some distance from camp, on a narrow neck of land between the bay and creek, where I could sit down while on post.

There is, naturally, more or less discussion as to the possibility of the rebels raiding over here from the Virginia shore, but they will not venture on any such foolhardy expedition. They took two of our small boats up in the Rappahannock river the other day and are reported to be mounting heavy guns on them, but they would have about as much show against our gunboats here as a boy with a bean-shooter would.

Last night about forty prisoners and convalescents came down from Alexandria, and among the number was Bill Ramsdell. Notwithstanding his escapades he is a fine fellow and I was glad to see him. Our oven is completed and is a work of art. There are a great many schooners out in the river, raking for oysters, and people here say mackerel will be plenty before long.

Some of our Johnny Rebs have been trying to get away. By some means three of them got out by the guard the other night and started for the country. They didn't get far—only to the creek which makes Point Lookout almost an island. It is pretty wide at this end, quite a little pond, and looks more formidable for wading than it really is. One of their party couldn't swim, so they finally hid in the bushes, where they were found the next morning. They didn't make a very good job of it. "Hang 'em!" said Marston, "they won't stay and let us treat 'em well, when we want to."

George Slade has not made his appearance yet, and I think he has not been heard from.

I see by the list of drafted men in the papers that some of the meanest Copperheads in New London and Newbury have been drawn, and now I am interested to see what they propose to do. I wish they would send a few of the worst ones out here for the old Second to break in.

The Paymaster came down here a week ago and paid us up to the first of July, but he didn't have to disburse a great amount of money to the rank and file. The clothing account was squared up, and there were but very few men who had not overdrawn their allowance. Some did not have pay enough coming to balance their clothing account. To add insult to injury, company property, such as canteens, haversacks and rubber blankets were put down on the men's clothing accounts. Alba Woods had 74 cents coming to him and I was not much better off. We doubtless have to thank some desk officer up at Washington, who is drawing, perhaps, several thousand dollars a year and perquisites, for this raid on the fellows who are drawing thirteen dollars a month and doing the fighting.

CX

Point Lookout, Md., *September 7, 1863.*

THE men who like to fish are having the time of their lives. My particular passion is crab fishing. The outfit consists of a boat, a piece of fish or meat on the end of a string, and a dip-net. Three or four of us coast along the shore, and when a crab is sighted the bait is thrown to him, he fastens onto it and is tolled up within reach of the dip-net. There is a big sea turtle here in the cove. We see him every day. Some of the boys *say* they are just dying to get hold of his tail or flippers and be towed out a piece.

What some negroes will risk for liberty was well illustrated by a slave family that came over last night from Virginia. There were a man and his wife and three children. They traveled all day, on foot, to reach the river. Then, although the water was very rough, they all packed into a little "dugout" canoe and got safely across the six or eight miles of tossing waters that to them was the high-

way to liberty. A syndicate of us bought the canoe, and Sam. Oliver and I tried it out today.

Day before yesterday we were reinforced by a company of regular cavalry that came down from Washington on the boat. They were from the same regiment so many of our boys went into a year ago, and we have learned the fate of some of them. Rod. Manning was killed, a few days ago, in a cavalry fight near Culpepper, and Nich. Biglin—our "Heenan"—is supposed to have been killed, as he had a bad saber cut and a bullet wound and could not be carried away. [He died in Andersonville.] Father will remember Rod. Manning as my tentmate at Alexandria. I am glad I did not blunder into the regulars with the other boys, for although we have had a rough time of it, they have had a rougher. A third of those who went from Company I are dead. When the boys went off to get transferred they urged me to go with them, and perhaps the only thing that saved me was the fact that I had come off a hard picket turn the night before and hated to crawl out of my warm nest.

Several more rebel prisoners have escaped, and in consequence of the growing propensity to run away they have had their watches, money and other valuables taken away from them, and they have been restricted in many privileges they formerly enjoyed. I understand a board fence is to be put around the prison camp, and that will help some; but the crying need is for more men to do guard duty. Some of the men who ran away have been recaptured.

Most of our married officers have their wives here and are keeping house in the little tenements on "Chesapeake Avenue."

CXI

Point Lookout, Md., *September 9, 1863.*

BILL RAMSDELL had his trial today, but I have heard nothing of its course or result. Bill told me he was going to plead his own cause. In any civil court he would be acquitted; but this is a military court, and Bill is only a private, and I am not so sure. It is getting to be more and more so that there is one law for officers and another for enlisted men. Shoulder-straps are a great protection to the men wearing them. For instance: At Washington

Colonel Bailey broke a sergeant for getting drunk, and issued a terrible manifesto decreeing condign punishment for any one who should disgrace the regiment in a like manner. Now for the sequel. A few days ago one of our officers appeared at guard-mount so gloriously drunk that he could not walk straight, and made a big bull of the whole ceremony, to the disgrace both of himself and the regiment. Has he been disciplined as the sergeant was? Not on your life.

Friday Evening, September 11.

Now for a tale of wild adventure! I came off guard at nine o'clock this morning, and Sam. Oliver and I arranged to go a-fishing. We did not get off until after dinner, which for Dan. and I consisted of a big mess-pan of potatoes and bread and butter. We worked pretty hard to find some worms for bait, but not a worm could be found on the Point; so we caught a few grasshoppers and a crab and started in a dugout for a point about two miles up the river. We fished diligently and faithfully, but not a fish came to our hooks. But we were repaid for our trouble by several very near views of the giant turtles which have lately made their appearance here. Several times they came up close to the boat. If they can bite as savagely as a "snapper" in proportion to their size—O, my! Their heads looked as large as a man's, and their spread of flippers was tremendous. They would stick their heads out of the water, give a big puff, and lazily roll under again. As we couldn't catch fish, we went ashore, had a good swim, and then went home. Then I found I had left a rebel officer's belt on the beach, and I paddled the boat back again and picked up the belt.

Here is another: Colonel Bailey, Steve Smiley and a few others went out sailing, yesterday, in a dugout they had rigged up with a keel and a sail. They had no trouble running out before the wind, but when it came to beating back they couldn't get anywhere. They went kiting about, hither and thither, and their boat did everything but what they wanted it to. One of our armed schooners fired two shots to bring them to, but they couldn't heave to if the fate of the world had depended on it. At last they came within an ace of running down one of the gunboats, which obligingly lowered a boat and towed them ashore.

I do not know yet the result of Bill Ramsdell's court martial,

but he says he is perfectly satisfied with the way he got his side of the case in. The President of the court did not hesitate to say that Bill's treatment had been "shameful" in some particulars.

We have not had a drop of rain here for some time, although it is cloudy almost every day and looks as if it was going to pour right away. But we have an almost constant breeze, which is very refreshing, although it is so late in the season that it begins to be a little cool.

Old Dan. is the prince of story tellers. He tells me stories of Ireland and of his own adventures there and elsewhere. I like to hear him. He will start in with some entirely reasonable and probable narrative. Then he tells me something a little steeper, which I pretend to swallow. Properly encouraged, he goes on, each time improving on his last, until Gulliver and Munchausen sink into insignificance. Then I say: "Och, Dan., what a divvle of a liar ye are!" He twists his picked nose, snaps his eyes, and the show is over.

CXII

Point Lookout, Md., *September 18, 1863.*

I WAS on guard yesterday, coming off this morning, and it was a lucky strike, as a rain storm has just set in. So while the poor fellows on duty today are paddling up and down in the wet, I will sit in my comfortable tent, nice and dry. But if the storm holds on tomorrow my crowing will be over and I'll be the one out in the cold. Our Seventeenth men will leave us very soon. Their time is up, but they are being kept here on the plea of waiting for a mustering officer and paymaster. There are three still doing duty in Company I. We had six, but three have died. Since our arrival here the regiment has lost five by death, four of whom were from the Seventeenth.

A good portion of our Reb prisoners, being out of ready money, have taken to manufacturing little trinkets for sale to our men. They make bone rings and bosom pins and other ornaments, some of which are of remarkable workmanship. And they make wooden fans which are very ingenious.

If the Fifth Regiment are coming down to help us I wish they would come along. I have got tired of standing guard every other day as regularly as days come around. We hear they are not having as good a time at home as we did. I had rather be out here than to be cooped up as they are, right at their homes and yet not permitted to spend their time there.

Sunday Evening, September 20.

The Governor, Jack Hale and Dan. Clark were down here yesterday and made speeches to a crowd at headquarters. Hale said we would probably stay here until we are discharged, and that we had not got much longer to serve.

CXIII

Point Lookout, Md., *September 28, 1863.*

NOW I can answer your question as to what I think has become of George Slade. This very minute I have received a letter from him, dated at Camp Parole, Annapolis. He has just got in from Richmond, where he has been a prisoner at Belle Isle.

I am going to burn just four inches of candle. When not on duty the boys have fine times boating and fishing. As soon as we got off guard today I went a-fishing with two other fellows, and did not get back till the middle of the afternoon. We had a grand time and poor luck. I got only three.

There was a great naval disaster last Saturday. Steve Smiley and three or four other bold mariners have been fitting up a boat that was intended to be the boss of the fleet. Saturday, with a stiff breeze blowing, they set out for a sail. They went down the river in grand style and out into the bay. There was an injudicious combination of a cranky boat, too much sail and too much wind, and the first thing they knew the boat was bottom side up with care and the crew afloat on the fierce rolling tide. A gunboat sent a boat to pick them up, and they returned to camp wiser and wetter men.

We are receiving batches of prisoners every few days now. The Fort Delaware prisoners are being transferred here, a steamer being kept busy all the time. There are said to be about nine thousand there awaiting transfer. Day before yesterday we had an arrival of prisoners taken on Morris Island, S. C.

We are building a stockade across "the neck," a narrow strip of sand connecting the Point with the mainland. I don't know whether I wrote you, a short time ago, about five rebels escaping from here. Well, in a squad which was brought in a few days ago who should appear but one of these same fellows, back again! He had made his way to his regiment, got into a skirmish immediately on his arrival, and was again taken prisoner and returned to his old quarters.

Some of our officers are a good deal exercised just now with fears for their positions. Under the new regulations a regiment must have a certain number of men to entitle it to a colonel, and a company more than sixty men to entitle it to a second lieutenant. And the fact that our regiment, with its reduced rolls, is not entitled to anything higher than a major in command, and no company has men enough to give it a second lieutenant, has impressed our officers with a settled conviction that the regiment should be filled up with conscripts. Our second lieutenants have nearly all been made since the first of July, when the order went into effect. But one of them told me, yesterday, that Governor Gilmore had got ahead of the Government by dating their commissions back beyond the first of July. But for all that, some of them who have not yet been mustered are fearful they never will be. It is a solemn fact that we now have more officers, commissioned and non-commissioned, than we have privates doing duty in this regiment.

Thursday, October 1.

Last night I was on patrol duty in the prison camp—really a sort of policeman to see that order was maintained, and especially that there were no unusual gatherings which might develope into an attempt to rush the camp guard. The only assemblage permitted was a religious meeting in an open space in camp—a regular old-fashioned prayer meeting, the character of which was accepted as a guaranty against treachery. Marston thinks some of the prisoners are plotting an outbreak, which is not at all improbable, as in such a gathering there are sure to be more or less enterprising hot-heads. One of these insisted on passing a sentry's beat the other night, in spite of all commands to halt. When he did halt he had a wooden "tompion" in his leg, the sentry having forgotten to remove it from the muzzle of his gun.

I have a good matrass, made by filling my bunk with hay, then pulling my old shelter tent over it and nailing down at the sides.

CXIV

Point Lookout, Md., *October 8, 1863.*

THE story is going that, the last of this month, the colonel, lieutenant-colonel and all the second lieutenants of this regiment are to be mustered out, as we have not men enough to allow us these officers. In my company there are seven privates doing duty, and three commissioned officers, which seems to be rather a top-heavy organization. The men are watching the course of events with a good deal of amused interest, and the officers with an equal amount of anxiety.

A shanty for a Masonic lodge is being put up today. Desmond suggests that there is more need of a comfortable guard house. But Dan. is a devoted Catholic and doesn't believe in Masons anyway.

The fence around the prisoners' camp is progressing rapidly. It is about a dozen feet high. Five of the Rebs made an attempt to escape night before last. One hid himself under the commissary building, but was soon found, and the hole through which he had crawled was securely boarded up.

Friday Evening.

I went on guard tonight at 5 and did not get relieved till after 8 and am feeling pretty cross. I saw in a paper tonight a list of the men drafted in Manchester. There were some I was glad to have drawn, although I doubt if there is the making of one good soldier in the whole crowd.

Our guard duty will be somewhat easier hereafter, as the fence is nearly completed and less posts will be required around the camp. Already we can divide our men into three reliefs instead of two, thus giving us a chance to get a little sleep between times.

THE SOLDIER BOY

CXV

Point Lookout, Md., *October 27, 1863.*

TWO of our fellows who were captured at Gettysburg have got in from the parole camp at Annapolis. When they came I expected to see George Slade with them. I had a letter from him only a few days before announcing that he had just got in from a "hell upon earth"—a rebel prison—"tired, dirty and lousy," as he expressed it—and asking me to send him five dollars. And now they bring me word that he is dead. I had no better friend in the regiment than good, loyal old George Slade.

Another detachment of the Second Cavalry has arrived here, among whom are some of the boys who went out of our regiment at Alexandria, and from them we get authentic news of all the boys. Rod. Manning was killed instantly at Culpepper—shot in the mouth. "Heenan" was not killed, although he had a fierce saber cut on his head. When our boys went to pick him up he told them to let him die where he was. They were, in fact, so hard pressed that they could not have got him off anyway. But he has since turned up as a prisoner in Richmond.

There has been a little disturbance up country. One of our officers engaged in recruiting negroes was shot by an exasperated slaveholder. Another officer came down today for a force to go up and preserve order, and also for a gunboat to prevent them from running their slaves from Maryland over into Virginia. A detachment of cavalry has gone up. It beats everything how the contrabands are coming in both from Maryland and Virginia. They come sometimes in squads of fifteen or twenty, and most of the men go into the army or some branch of the government service. Those coming from Maryland are not sent back into bondage, as formerly, but if the owner is loyal he receives three hundred dollars for his man, who is put in the army. This will make Maryland a free state before many years. The situation is very displeasing to the old secesh planters.

We are building a combination guard- and block house, of logs, in which a howitzer will be mounted to command the main entrance to the prison camp.

One of our men who deserted at Yorktown returned today—brought back under guard; and I hear there are quite a number of men at Washington who deserted right after the first Bull Run battle. It will be a corker on them if they have to make up the time they have lost.

I have a bundle of curios I would like to send home by express. There is no express office here, but the sutler brings down all the express matter directed to the Point. Bill Pendleton, of this company, who was mail agent, used to carry bundles to Washington for the boys, but he had some trouble with the captain of the boat and has been relieved.

CXVI

Point Lookout, Md., *November 1, 1863.*

MY BOX came today, bringing a good supply of clothing, so I think I can hold out pretty comfortably this winter. I am, also, unusually well fixed as to quarters. Have rearranged to take in Bill Pendleton. Bill and I have an upper bunk, and Dan a lower bunk all to himself. Bill has a good matrass and half a dozen quilts and we undress and go to bed like folks. I found much more of an eatable nature than I expected in my box. We are clearing out cakes, pies and apples, and are surveying one of those big onions to find the most available point of attack.

Bill Ramsdell won out in his court martial, was acquitted, released from arrest, and returned to the company for duty yesterday. I find Bill has a very bitter feeling against Captain Gordon and attributes most of his troubles to him. The captain warmly congratulated Bill and told him he had done everything he could to secure his acquittal. But Bill grimly says he knows better.

Last night was a night of excitement over attempts of prisoners to escape. Three or four different parties had their plans all laid. One squad had made arrangements with a sentry to let five men pass beyond his beat, paying him a handsome sum in greenbacks; but no sooner did he get their money than he betrayed them to the provost marshal. The consequence was that a squad of cavalrymen was lying in wait and two of the adventurers were severely wounded.

The sympathies of our boys are all with the Rebs and against the fellow who was mean enough to take their money and then give them away. Two other parties had tunnels completed from their tents to a point outside the fence, but their schemes miscarried. I was down at my tent, eating my supper, when the "long roll" beat at the guard house, and I never knew before that there were so many logs and mud holes on Point Lookout as I tumbled over and into in my haste to answer the call.

Monday Evening.

More improvements! I wish you could see our stove. It is the biggest box stove ever made, I guess. It is not exactly *in* our tent, but one end is. If the whole apparatus was there wouldn't be room for anything else. It is a government stove. We discovered a nest of about fifty, and one dark night not long ago the Second confiscated the whole lot. I hear they are coming around tomorrow to pick them up, in which event we have done a good deal of heavy lugging for nothing.

Col. Bailey has been living in one of the houses "down town," but today his tent is being fixed up for his reception. I do not know whether he is going to move his wife up to camp or not.

Being off duty today I went oystering. Got lots of them, and cut my fingers all to pieces shucking them.

Two volunteer recruits for our company came down on the boat tonight. They are a decided novelty—living proofs that there are a few left who do not wait to be drafted.

CXVII

Point Lookout, Md., *November 8, 1863.*

THERE is more trouble for our last batch of second lieutenants. When commissioned, their names were dropped from the rolls of enlisted men; but when it came to being mustered, it could not be done, the regiment not having men enough. They are not on the rolls of enlisted men, and cannot be mustered as officers, so they are wondering where they are and how they are going to get any pay for the past four months. It is a serious problem for some of them who have spent considerable sums on officers' outfits.

My big stove, "The Swamp Angel," has been taken away, and I don't know as I am very sorry, it was such an infernally clumsy contrivance. We had the fun of stealing it, anyway. Captain Gordon says he has made arrangements for a little sheet-iron stove for each tent, which will be much better.

Our two new recruits from Manchester have both been placed in my tent. One, named Messenger, was in the Sixteenth Regiment. I do not remember the name of the other. [Jason Sherwood, a Seventeenth man, who served in Company F and re-enlisted shortly after his discharge.]

A couple of steamers were in collision, out on the bay, Friday night. One, the "Curfew," was sunk, and the other, the "Louisiana," was towed in here the next day by a gunboat. One of them, it is stated, has been engaged in the hunt for the "Alabama."

Last Wednesday was state election day in Maryland, and several wagons rigged out with flags and banners, and loaded with citizens and unarmed soldiers, went up to St. Mary's. It reminded me of some of my old election rackets in New Hampshire.

The wild geese are beginning to come along. One small flock passed over the camp yesterday. Quite a number of shots were fired at them, and one big fellow came down. The residents here say there will be big rafts of them on the river this winter.

A schooner has just gone ashore near camp, in trying to get around the point. Our guard details are so arranged now that we are on duty only every fourth day. If this continues, we will have an easy time this winter.

CXVIII

Point Lookout, Md., *November 14, 1863.*

THE FIFTH REGIMENT has just landed and gone into camp. They came down from Washington yesterday afternoon, but did not land until this morning. There are 750, mostly substitutes, and I hear they have not come to help us on guard duty, but to be drilled preparatory to going to the front. We have the cutest little sheet-iron stove that ever was, set up and in running order.

Monday Afternoon.

Our new-comers of the Fifth are the toughest crowd I ever saw credited to New Hampshire. They are loaded with money paid to them as substitutes, and no sooner were they landed than almost every man was loading up with supplies from the sutler's. They are not going to do any guard duty, so we hear and so it appears. They are kept very close, having a guard about their camp, and cannot get out without a pass. If they had the same freedom the Second has, there would doubtless be a grand hiatus of the bounty fellows.

Two prisoners were shot yesterday. The Fifth's drum corps was playing "Dixie," and when they got through the Rebs crowded up to the fence and gave "Three cheers for Dixie!" The demonstration soon became riotous and threatening, and was passing beyond all control, when the Twelfth man on guard at that point fired into the crowd and brought the crazy fellows to their senses.

Bill Ramsdell is doing duty right along, but he came very near getting into another scrape the other night. You must know that we soldiers have a free-and-easy way of appropriating to our own use any little bit of government property that will contribute to our comfort. It isn't stealing. We all do it. The government has sent whole shiploads of boards here, for fences, houses, &c., and if we fellows want one or two to build a bunk or fix our quarters, we take them, and no harm done. Well, the other night Bill went out on a piratical cruise, shouldered a board, and was almost into camp with it when, as ill luck would have it, he ran up against General Marston himself, who ordered him to drop his load, personally escorted him down to headquarters, and turned him over to the guard. But Bill pulled up two or three tent-pins, crawled out under the canvas, and in due time appeared in camp lugging his board, which he had gathered in again on his way up. As all this took place at night, and as the Twelfth was on guard, Bill flattered himself no one would ever be any wiser as to who the prisoner was. But he was recognized by one of the guard, who thought the escape of Marston's own prisoner too good a thing to keep, and it leaked to the officer of the guard. In due time a guard appeared in camp hunting for "a man named Ramsdell." But nobody knew any such man. The guard was a mighty decent fellow, and didn't rake with a fine-tooth comb. We kept Bill out of sight until a new officer of the guard

came on, when the matter was forgotten or dropped at headquarters.

I did not get off with my guard duty day before yesterday quite as well as I expected. A cold rain set in, and if it had not been for the overcoat and rubber blanket that came in my box, I should have suffered. That day we occupied, for the first time, the new guard house, which, however, had not been shingled, and it rained harder inside than out. So I came down to my tent and sat while not on post, and in this way made the best of a dismal situation.

CXIX

Point Lookout, Md.,
Saturday Evening, November 21, 1863.

RAINY and dreary outside, but inside is warmth and comfort. There is a good fire in the little stove, the tent is tight as a drum, and there is a snug warm bunk for me when I get ready to turn in.

You appear to be having quite a little run of adventures. Well, here is one of mine. The other day I took an outing up into the country, just to see what sort of a place it is up there. It was dark when I got within a mile of camp, and I was tired and anxious to get in the shortest way. I knew that by the route which would save me half my travel I would have to wade a network of little creeks, but that didn't trouble me, and across-lots I started. Wading into creek No. 1, I found myself up to my middle, with a strong tide setting in. But I was in for it, and I kept forging ahead, but when I came to the last crossing I wished I had gone the other way. This was at the point where the creek empties into the river. It was not wide, but the tide was setting into it like a millrace. I waded in. Once or twice I thought I would be swept off my feet and floated up the creek like a piece of driftwood. But I got through—and so ended my soul-stirring adventure.

It is reported that we are to have "Sibley" tents for winter quarters, and that all the improvements we have been making will have to go to make way for the new arrangement. The Sibley is much larger than our A-tents, and is a great canvas cone supported by a center pole. Ours are to be stockaded about four feet high on logs planted on end in the ground, and ten men will make a tent's crew.

Each tent is equipped with a stove, and the whole outfit makes the most comfortable quarters imaginable. The only drawback is the trouble of making the change.

The new men of the Fifth are making a great deal of trouble by their attempts to desert. Last Tuesday several made the venture, and one party got clean away by taking a boat from the beach at our camp. As a result, Marston has ordered all the boats taken away, and there is the end of our boating and oyster raking. Two Subs managed to get out to a schooner, and struck a bargain with a negro—who was captain, cook and all hands—to set them on shore outside our picket line. As they landed, a squad of mounted men went tearing up the beach and gathered them in, while a gunboat went after the schooner and brought it in as a prize.

Colonel Bailey has had an old shanty moved up here, which I suppose he intends to have fixed up for himself and wife. He has been quartering down on the point, and it is reported that General Marston has ordered him to make his quarters with his regiment.

Rats! Rats!! Rats!!! We are overrun with them. They swarm everywhere, and are big enough to waylay a cat. They run over us as we lie in our bunks, and the other night one dropped plump in my face from the upper bunk. One of the fellows in that bunk got his hand on one and combed it across the tent, where it struck the boards with a loud thump and a terrified squeak.

I hear the Fifth are going to take their turn at guard duty to-morrow. If they do it will make our duty much easier.

CXX

Point Lookout, Md., *November 28, 1863.*

QUITE a relief it is to us overworked fellows to have the Fifth take their turn at guard duty. We cannot now be called upon oftener than every third day, and probably not as often as that. You need have no uneasiness about small pox here. There is only one case in this regiment, so far as I know. Most of the cases are from the prison camp. The small pox hospital is outside the lines, and the guard are immunes who have had the disease.

Evening.—I have just had a good supper of oysters, and the papers bring us news of a great victory at Chattanooga, so I am feeling pretty well both in body and mind.

CXXI

Point Lookout, Md.,
Sunday, December 6, 1863.

IF I had only known, I need not have been dreading, as I have, the cold nights coming, with guard duty out in the snow and rain. I have served now coming on three years, without asking any favors nor getting any. But last Tuesday Colonel Bailey issued an order detailing me as mail carrier for this regiment. It is decidedly the softest job at Point Lookout. I am entirely relieved from all guard duty and drill. Our mail comes in every other day, and I go down to the boat—about a quarter of a mile—bring up the mail and distribute it, and the next morning carry the outgoing mail down to the boat. That is all there is to it. Really an army postmaster. Jesse Dewey has been performing double duty for a time, as orderly sergeant and mail carrier, but the two jobs interfered with each other, and I am the beneficiary.

During the past week our regiment received an installment of about 175 substitutes. Company I got a dose of twenty. There are a few good men among them, but they are mighty few. Most of them are foreigners, and many of them are just watching for an opportunity to desert. Three or four got away the other night in a boat that came ashore from one of the gunboats. The officer left his boat without a guard, and perhaps there wasn't any swearing when he came for it and it was gone. It takes the iron hand to keep such a gang in bounds. More than twenty of them have already been tied up to the flagstaff, bucked and gagged, or otherwise disciplined. We have never had a guard around our camp until today, but now it is to be a fixture. So much extra work for the boys, all on account of these human vermin that New Hampshire is filling up her old regiments with. The old men are terribly disgruntled. It makes no difference to me personally, and it does seem good to turn in every night for an unbroken rest. The story is going that we are to be relieved by detachments of the Invalid Corps and sent to the front before long. I have no idea though that we will be sent away until the spring campaign opens. George Colby came down the first of the week and is clerking in Bailey's sutler shop. [Geo. H., then of Manchester, and later, until his tragic death, in the employ of the railroad at Plymouth, N. H.]

CXXII

Point Lookout, Md.,
Sunday, December 13, 1863.

THE mail did not go to Washington today. Last night, after I had gone to bed and to sleep, the mail agent came in, woke me up, and told me to have my mail at headquarters before three o'clock. So I turned out of my bunk at half-past two. It was dark as a pocket, raining great guns, and the wind blowing a hurricane. I put on my overcoat and rubber poncho and paddled down to headquarters. But, a few minutes ago, Jess. Dewey stuck his head into the tent and told me the mail agent was still here and the mail had not gone out yet.

It is among the possibilities that the rebels may attempt to rescue the prisoners here, and every precaution is being taken against any such movement. The road up into the country is patrolled at night, and the gunboat squadron has been reinforced until we now have ten vessels here ready for any emergency.

Frank Everett, in the Manchester *Mirror* office, writes his brother Henry that Farnsworth is back in the *American* office, having resigned his position in the army.

Monday, December 14.

There has been a terrible gale today, and it is a wonder to me that my tent has not taken to itself wings and flown away. Efforts are soon to be made to get the old men to re-enlist. They will be given a furlough of thirty days and a big bounty. Captain Gordon is to be the recruiting officer for this regiment, and will commence operations very soon. I shall not re-enlist.

CXXIII

Point Lookout, Md., *December 19, 1863.*

OUR OLD REGIMENT got another dose today—350 Subs., off the same piece as our first lot. It is tough on us old New Hampshire boys. Quite a number of our precious Subs got away night before last, and yesterday morning a detachment started out to scour the country for them. Four were picked up and sent

in yesterday. The detachment has not yet returned, and are searching every barn and haystack, and we hope they will get some more, living or dead—preferably dead.

Sunday, December 20.

This is comfort—the wood pile for a seat and my overcoat for a cushion. It is cold and blustering outside, but a good fire in our little stove makes it warm and comfortable within. By the way, I am going to move before long—am to have a tent all to myself, for a post office.

The old rumor factory is in full operation. The latest story is quite ingenious. According to this story, which has leaked down to some veracious fellow from some headquarters, the old men of the regiment are to be mounted and take the place of the cavalry detachment now here. Bill Ramsdell is to be sergeant-major of the new organization, but our non-commissioned officers are to stay and look after the conscripts.

Mrs. Bailey has gone home—went a few days ago, with Hen. Pillsbury as her attendant. He has a twenty days furlough.

A few days ago the Reb. prisoners, led by their sergeants, made an organized assault on one of their cook houses. I don't know what their grievance was. One was shot dead by a sentry and several wounded. The next day ten of the sergeants who had been conspicuous in the riot were tied by their hands to the posts of the fence and given several hours in which to meditate on their sins.

CXXIV

Point Lookout, Md., *December 25, 1863.*

XMAS GREETINGS! One of our captains said the other day that the old men would probably be discharged inside of two months, but I take no stock in the story. I was talking with Captain Platt yesterday, and he had lots of nice things to say about my wife. I learned a great deal about you and Arie Platt, and you may be sure I was an attentive listener to all he had to say.

General Ben. Butler was here yesterday, looking things over very closely, and I understand he is arranging an exchange of prisoners.

Tuesday, December 29.

Since I began this letter no mail has come in until this morning, and none has gone out. The mail boat was sunk by ice, and I have been anxiously watching for the boat that didn't come. I have got to carry the mail down in half an hour, so must close.

CXXV

Point Lookout, Md., *December 31, 1863.*

I AM in Quint's sutler shop, writing on the head of a barrel. Quint [Atherton W., of Manchester] is sutler at the prison camp, and I help him a little, just enough to pay for the butter and other sutler's goods that I want. I have an ocean of waste time, and the arrangement is profitable and highly satisfactory both to Quint and myself.

We had rather a jolly time here Christmas day. First, there was a greased pig, which made no end of merriment. He was one of those gaunt, ugly creatures that run wild in these southern woods. He had just been brought in, and was as wild and savage as a wolf. So when his pursuers closed in, on, over, around and under him, he made a gallant fight for liberty and freely used all the defensive weapons the Lord had provided him with. Then there were wrestling and sparring matches and a footrace.

Seven boatloads of negroes have come in from Virginia today. I was down on the beach when one load landed. There were 32 men, women and children, with all their household truck, packed into one boat. It was a smart likely-looking lot of contrabands, and no doubt some poor misguided rebel is now mourning the loss of several thousand dollars' worth of live stock. A great many of the negroes that come in are probably from Maryland, but all are received alike, and but very few, if any, of the refugees ever get back into their masters' hands.

January 1, 1864.

I wish you a Happy New Year! I sat up pretty late last night playing "muggins" down at the sutler's shop.

Colonel Bailey issued orders to company commanders this morning which are received with greater satisfaction by the *old* boys than by some of the officers. The "company funds" which have been

accumulating during the past two years now amount to a very considerable sum in each company. This money is in the hands of the company commanders, and the good it has done to the men to whom it belongs has been very slight indeed. In fact, some of the captains who have left the regiment have carried off the company funds without making any account of it, and that was the end of it. Well, since these mercenaries came along, with hundred-dollar bills sticking out of every pocket, Captain Gordon has commenced using this fund that had been taken out of the hides of the old men, to buy potatoes, onions and other luxuries, the greater part of which are consumed by our cussed Subs. There is a bit of malice in this, attributable to a feud between Gordon and the bulk of the old men, for there have been several times in the past when this fund could have been used to very good advantage for the men it belonged to. The old boys were indignant, and Bill Ramsdell told Colonel Bailey, and he was mad, and this morning the company commanders were instructed that the company funds were to be used for the benefit of the old men only. By Gordon's account, the amount due each of the old men is about six dollars, and we are not willing to divide that with the Subs.

CXXVI

Point Lookout, Md., *January 2, 1864.*

CANNOT write a long letter now, but will in a few days. I have been hard at work all day constructing the walls for my new post office tent, and am very tired indeed. It will be on the extreme left of the field and staff line, and I will be a near neighbor to Bailey's sutler shop.

CXXVII

Point Lookout, Md., *January 10, 1864.*

WE got about two and a half inches of snow a few nights ago, and although we have had pleasant weather since, it has been so cold that much snow still remains. During the past few days the work of demolishing and cleaning out the shantytown

where contrabands have quartered has been going on. The ground where the camp stood is a perfect labyrinth of rat holes, and the swarms that are domiciled there are almost inconceivable. Rat hunts are a standard amusement, and bushels of them have been unearthed and killed. In the regimental camps they are thicker than flies in summer time, and an awful pest, running over everything and everybody at night, and stealing everything eatable they can get their teeth onto. But Jess. Dewey has got the deadest open and shut on them. Some of the boys caught a little owl out in the woods and gave him to Jess., and since Mr. Owl assumed charge of affairs in that tent rats and mice have given it a wide berth. He is a cunning little fellow—sits all day long on his box, pulling away at his piece of fresh meat. If you whistle to him, he looks up as grave as a judge, and he is really a great addition to the company.

Our mail is very irregular now. The boat that got in from Washington yesterday was three days late, being delayed by ice in the river. She had to break her way for fifty miles through ice thick enough to bear a man. One wooden boat attempted to force her way up the river, but was so badly cut up by the ice that she had to turn back. But we have a connection for outgoing mail by way of the Fortress Monroe and Baltimore boat, and I now send much mail that way.

The prison camp is soon to be enlarged, and all the rebel officers now at Sandusky, Ohio, are to be brought here. I hear that 200 men from our regiment, with a battery, are going over into Virginia on a scouting expedition.

Two of our tent's crew will, I expect, move out tomorrow. If they do I shall be in no particular hurry to get into my new quarters, as Dan. and I can be as comfortable as you please right where we are.

CXXVIII

Point Lookout, Md., *January 16, 1864.*

A MAIL reached us yesterday—the first we have had since the 9th. Reason, the ice in the river. The boat started from Washington all right, ran down as far as Mount Vernon, about

fifteen miles, and anchored for the night. When she started, she *didn't* start, for she was frozen in as tight as a drum. And there she lay in the ice, for two days, with our mail aboard. Then another boat came and cut her out. During this lay-up some of our boys on board went ashore on a visit to Washington's home and tomb.

The monotony of camp life has been broken by a raid across the river into the counties of Northumberland, Lancaster and Richmond. The expedition left here last Tuesday, the 12th, and was made up of 150 cavalry and detachments of 150 men from both the Second and Twelfth. Bill Ramsdell was one of the marauders, and he says it was one of the greatest larks of the war. The men came home loaded with every conceivable kind of plunder, but they were pretty well fagged out. The expedition went up the river about fifteen miles, then up a creek several miles, where they destroyed a sloop and several schooners, then landed and marched inland. They spread out over the country, and picked up quite a number of prisoners—soldiers on furlough, conscript officers, &c. One of these was a captain, who was enjoying a carriage ride with his lady love. He was politely requested to get down, one of the boys politely took his seat in the carriage, politely drove the young lady home, politely helped her out, bade her good bye with exquisite politeness, and drove away with the team as a prize of war.

You ask me about Charlie Farnham. It was not here, but down in South Carolina, I think, that he was drowned. He had been discharged from this regiment and had joined the navy. As we hear it, he was in a boat, which capsized, and he had nearly reached the shore when he sank.

Sunday, January 17.

I must tell you, before I forget it, all about our crazy man. One of the fellows in my tent, who came out about two months ago, had evidently got tired of the service, and began to play crazy, for a discharge. He began to sleep all day, so as to be in good shape to lie awake all night. For two nights he kept us awake with his "Boots ten feet long," "Man in the tent," "Where am I?" "Who am I?" and such nonsense. When awake in the daytime he was continually hunting for horsehairs on his hands, and it was a decidedly interesting case of amateur lunacy. He couldn't eat anything—so he said—but he managed to pack away a good quantity of grub on the

sly. Well, he started in on his third night, and kept his twaddle going until midnight, when something happened. Dan's Irish got the best of him and he could hold in no longer. He kicked off the blankets that covered us, elevated his heels, and fairly kicked the top bunk into kindling wood. The crazy man landed on the stove, and the wreckage was scattered all over the tent. Then old Dan. opened up with his tongue and gave our amateur lunatic Hail Columbia, Rule Britannia and Erin go Bragh, all rolled into one, and threatening to take him out and pitch him into the river if he didn't become immediately and permanently sane. Dan's treatment effected a complete and wonderful cure.

One of the old men of the regiment was married a short time ago to the daughter of an old planter living up country a short distance. The fellow was Pete Gravlin; the girl seventeen and very pretty; the parents rich. The old folks were dead set against any such arrangement, but Pete and the maiden were determined, so down to the Point he brought her and she became Mrs. Gravlin.

A collection has been taken up in this regiment for a fund to build a chapel. The human desire to outstrip our neighbors has made the "collection" a success. The Twelfth built one which cost $300, and now twice that sum has been raised in the Second, and we are congratulating ourselves, not upon the prospect of having *a* chapel, but upon the fact that it will be bigger than the Twelfth's.

CXXIX

Point Lookout, Md., *January 23, 1864.*

I AM seated in the sutler's shop at the prison camp with a whole ream of paper before me, waiting to be written over. The mail got in last night, for a wonder, on time. A warm spell has opened the ice in the river. I got a letter from Frank Morrill, and he writes me, "I want you to assume command of Frances and Nealie when you hear that I am coming home, meet me at the depot and escort me to the house." [When he came, he came in his coffin, having received mortal wounds the following July.]

We have had a most delightful day, and the boys of Company I have been busy stockading their new Sibley tents. As soon as they

move in I will have a post office tent all to myself, and I have got it in my mind now just how it will be rigged up for my business, even to the establishment of an art gallery, the nucleus of which I already have in a highly colored lithograph from a cigar box.

Sunday, January 24.

I am messing now with Hen. Everett, who is clerk for the Adjutant, and a fellow named Soseman. We do our own cooking, and as a consequence live better—much better—than we should if we depended entirely on the company cooks and rations. We have beefsteak, baked beans, fritters, and the best coffee on the Point, and gathered about our little mess table at the Adjutant's quarters, envy no man his share of the good things of life.

Last night I saw about fifty rebels take the oath of allegiance. It was an impressive sight when these men raised their right hands and with uncovered heads swore to support the Constitution and the Government of the United States. They have a camp outside the prison camp and are on practically the same footing that we are.

CXXX

Point Lookout, Md., *January 29, 1864.*

BUSY time now, putting up the new tents, and when the work is done the regiment will certainly have good winter quarters. The fine weather continues. It is as warm and pleasant as a New Hampshire May, and the breezes from the south are balmy and exhilarating.

Day before yesterday we witnessed a magnificent *mirage*, which brought the "Eastern Shore," distant twenty-five or thirty miles across the bay, to within an apparent distance of not more than five miles. The optical illusion continued until afternoon, when it faded gradually. The trees and houses became less and less distinct, and at last the outlines of the shore faded, until nothing met the eye but the sparkling waters of Chesapeake Bay.

The story is going the rounds that we old fellows who have not re-enlisted are to be discharged next month, so that we may be home for the March election. There may be something in this, as nine-tenths of the old men are stanch Republicans, and most of the

others are staunch War Democrats, which is just as good, and if the election is to be very close they would be a mighty reliable reinforcement. One of the boys in my company has a letter from one of the Governor's staff, who writes that we are coming home in February; and Marston's Assistant-Adjutant-General says we are going home soon.

Sunday, January 31.

Dan. has moved into one of the new Sibley tents, leaving me all alone, in solitary grandeur, and I declare I am lonesome. Large numbers of the Rebs here have taken the oath and enlisted into our army or navy. Day before yesterday officers of the navy came ashore and had all they could attend to until late in the evening, enlisting these men. A regiment also is to be recruited from them, which will probably be stationed where there is not much danger of their being taken prisoners, as in such an event, if recognized, they would be promptly executed.

Jess. Dewey has got a pleasant job as forage master up at Leonardstown, a few miles above here on the river. I am told that the paymaster came down on the boat last night and has gone up to Leonardstown today to pay off the cavalry and other troops up there. The men who have re-enlisted will go home on furlough as soon as they are paid.

The laugh is most decidedly on one of our fellows who, tiring of army fare, went out into the country to get a good square home meal. He found a place where they expressed their ability and willingness to give him just what he was looking for. He, of course, expected a rare feast, and what do you suppose he got? Bacon and hoecake, coffee without milk, no butter, nor any of the little trimmings that round out a Yankee "home meal." He came back to camp thoroughly disgusted with the Maryland farmer's bill of fare, and filled the aching void with a good square army ration.

The joke on another fellow came through a massive gold pen, which was given to him on condition that he send and have it repointed. In a few days the pen came back with this indorsement: "Your pen is *brass*, and I return pen and money."

One of the Fifth's substitutes was found drowned in the creek the other day. He probably tried to desert by swimming the creek, but could not make a go of it.

CXXXI

Point Lookout, Md., *February 7, 1864.*

I HAVE moved into my new tent at last, and have a mighty homelike little domicile, all to myself. It has a good floor and a nice roomy bunk. At the head of the bunk a little table equipped with writing materials. On one side of the door is my drop letter box, and in the opposite corner one of those cute little sheet-iron stoves. And other furnishings will come as they may be required. I already have my boxes arranged for distributing the mail—ten cigar boxes, one for each company, nailed to the wall. By the time I am discharged I will have an office that will rival Boston and New York.

I got a letter last night from an old schoolmate of mine—Lucius Chilson. He was my especial chum in the old South Grammar School on Park street. His home was then in Bridgeport, Conn., but his father sent him to Manchester especially to get him under Webster's iron discipline. He writes me that he has been in the Second Massachusetts regiment, that he was wounded in the wrist at Gettysburg, losing the use of his right hand, and is now in the Invalid Corps, at Cincinnati, Ohio. He has learned to write with his left hand, and is a first-class back-hand writer.

Rumors of our going home are flying as thick as ever. The latest is that all who desired would be granted a furlough of fifteen days to go home and vote. Mrs. Bailey, Mrs. Platt, Mrs. Wasley and other officers' wives are coming down within two or three weeks, and quarters are being fitted up in anticipation.

A little mail robbery came to light in a queer manner today. A fellow who used to have the run of my tent down in the company gave away a cheap little brass breastpin. The recipient recognized it at sight as the identical pin he had, some time before, sealed in an envelope for one of the men, and addressed and mailed to that man's little girl. The thief purloined it from the box, and was caught in a trap which nobody set for nobody,

The old boys of Company I are to present Colonel Bailey with a costly sword. The little remnant still left of the old "Abbott Guard"—the boys of 1861—have chipped in $150, and Jess. Dewey and Steve Smiley have gone to Baltimore to buy the sword. The

breach between Captain Gordon and the old men is now very wide and the feeling very bitter, and this sword business is in some degree an outcome of the feud. In this way the old men can show, in a way not open to criticism, how much more they think of their first captain than of their last. In addition to this, somebody has put the subs up to get a sword for our second-lieutenant, Dave Perkins. They have more money than they know how to spend, and you can work a collection on them for almost anything. With a sword presentation on each side of him, I don't see how a more adroit snub could have been arranged. I see Bill Ramsdell's fine Italian hand in the whole thing.

[This sword presentation record would not be complete without the story of the exploit of one of the subs who sailed under the name of Cady. He made himself conspicuous in denouncing the old men for slighting their captain. He solicited contributions from his fellow subs for a sword for Gordon, which, you may be sure, Gordon was fully advised of. Then he asked Gordon for a furlough of five days to attend to "a little private matter at Baltimore." He got his furlough, and that was the last ever seen of him in that regiment.]

But Gordon holds one trump card, and he is playing it for all it is worth. He has been making corporals of some of the last batch of bounty jumpers—actually putting these men in authority and position over the old fellows who have given nearly three years of faithful service to their country. I, on my special detail, am out from under it. If not, I think I should find some honorable way out—perhaps through a commission in a negro regiment.

On the night of the first day of this month, one of Gordon's new corporals was in charge of a squad of four men at the wharf. There were several boats there in their charge, and the corporal and his entire squad, with others to whom the word evidently been passed, made off with one of the boats during the night. Two days after, another squad of three deserters was brought in, having been picked up by one of the guard boats, many miles down the bay. It was a very cold, rough night, and one of the bounty jumpers had done a really good service to the country by freezing to death, while his two companions were, unfortunately, still alive.

CXXXII

Point Lookout, Md., *February 10, 1864.*

BILL RAMSDELL has just gone out of the tent. He is to make the presentation speech when we give Bailey the sword. He has been rehearsing what he is going to say, and it is tip-top—quite ornate and complimentary.

Friday, February 12.

The steamer "Whildin" is lying out in the river, a little ways from shore, it being so rough she can not get in to the wharf. Col. Bailey's wife and mother and several officers' wives are on board, and doubtless very anxious to get ashore. The going-home fever is on the increase, and the betting population are putting up their money freely that we will be home at the March election. I hear a bet of $50 was made this morning, but whether wind or money I don't know.

Saturday, February 13.

I received several letters yesterday and today, including a note from mother sent by the hands of Mrs. Captain Platt, who was one of the arrivals yesterday. Col. Bailey's sword was presented yesterday, and everything passed off slick as a pin. Three more of our subs attempted to desert, the other night. They set out in a dug-out canoe, the handling of which they were not equal to, and pretty soon, over she went. Two, unfortunately, managed to reach the shore. The other was drowned. Our deserting subs are really having hard luck. Three are known to have been drowned, and it is hoped the same fate has overtaken the gang Gordon's new corporal took off with him, as their boat was picked up, far out in the bay and bottom side up.

Uncle Luther's folks [Luther Trussell, of New London, N. H.] write me that Hamilton Messer, one of my boyhood cronies, who went out in the Eleventh, is dead. It is one of the pleasantest days imaginable, and I am sitting with the door of my tent wide open, looking out upon the camp, where all is bustle and activity—some wheeling sand to grade the company streets, some building houses for the officers, and little groups here and there, chatting, gossiping and arguing. Captain and Mrs. Platt just rode by on horseback.

CXXXIII

Point Lookout, Md., *February 20, 1864.*

ZERO WEATHER is pretty strenuous for this latitude, but that is what we have been getting. The frigid wave has struck us good and hard, and the river is again frozen up so that we have had no mail from Washington for five days. Last Wednesday the thermometer stood at *seventeen degrees below zero*, which would do credit even to New England. It was so cold Wednesday night that about midnight I had to turn out and build a fire. I filled my little stove with fine wood and soon had a roaring fire going, over which I sat and dozed until nearly morning.

There certainly is a prospect that a portion of the old men who have not re-enlisted will be given a chance to go home to vote at the coming election. Day before yesterday a list was made of the Republican members of the regiment, and it was my understanding that they were to be furloughed and sent home at the same time as the re-enlisted men. A boat came in yesterday morning to take the re-enlisted men, but went away without them, and it is not improbable that when she comes again it will be found she is to take away a hundred or two staunch Republicans, among whom I will be glad to be numbered.

Again there are apprehensions of a rebel attempt on this post. A picket boat brought information that there is quite a force of rebels at a point on the other side, with many small boats. Our little fleet is all ready for anything they may try on. An armed schooner lies right off our camp, with boarding nets up. A detachment of men from the Second has been sent on board to serve as marines, and if Johnny Reb strikes that boat he will have all the fun he wants.

Sunday, February 21.

Hen. Everett has a letter from his brother Willie, and they are expecting him home before election. They have what they consider absolutely reliable information that the Republican members of the regiment, if not others, are coming home. They will be disappointed, however. He cannot get away, as there is no one in the regiment who understands his duties well enough to undertake them.

CXXXIV

POINT LOOKOUT, MD., *February 29, 1864—Evening.*

JUST received a letter from you, and answer it at once with the announcement that within one week I will be with you. Furloughs are being made out with all haste, and we will probably be off before tomorrow night—possibly tonight. We are going all the way to Boston by boat, so this letter will reach you before we get to Boston. We will go first to Concord, and will be furloughed for some stated time from there. I shall, of course, make no delay in getting down to Manchester. I am writing identical letters both to Manchester and New London, so as to be sure of reaching you wherever you may be. Good bye, for a week.

NOTE

On February 24th 450 men from the three regiments started for New Hampshire on the steamer "Admiral Dupont," on furloughs of 20 days. Returning, they left Boston on March 18th, as narrated in the following letter.

CXXXV

POINT LOOKOUT, MD., *March 19, 1864.*

GOT back to Point Lookout last night at about one o'clock, safe and sound. The first thing, of course, I struck for my tent, with keen anticipation of the comfort ahead. As it came into view it struck me that Pendleton, who had been left in charge as acting postmaster, kept rather open house. The door was wide open, and when I got inside and felt around, I found nothing but an empty shell. Not a solitary piece of furniture met my inquiring touch. The stove was gone, the desk, distributing boxes—in fact,

the entire outfit. The establishment was entirely dismantled. For the first time in my whole army experience I was homesick.

I felt like one who treads alone
Some banquet hall deserted,
Whose guests were fled, its garlands dead,
And all but me departed.

Well, I went down to the company and turned into George Lawrence's bunk, and today I got the whole story. Pendleton carried things with a high hand, did not attend to his duties in any kind of manner, and his conduct became so outrageous that he was sent back to the company and the business turned over to the chaplain. So now "Othello's occupation 's gone!" Old Mr. Bailey told me he heard them planning to get rid of Pendleton, and the colonel said very emphatically that he wanted me to have the place when I came back. But they decided it would make but little difference to me what was done, as I would probably receive a commission within a few weeks. My choice seems to lie between taking a commission in a negro regiment or going back to company duty under Gordon and his precious gang of non-coms., and I think my preference will be for the negroes. I will have my furlough made out today, and will probably go to Washington for examination within a few days.

Now I must tell you about our trip back from New Hampshire. On our arrival in Boston we at once went on board the steamer "Guide"—and a slow old guide she was. But slow as she was, she was in a hurry to get away. The instant the baggage was on board she started, so suddenly that a number of the boys never got aboard, but were left behind. This was Tuesday afternoon, and Friday morning we were at Fortress Monroe. We got ashore about noon and loafed around until 5 o'clock, when we took the Baltimore boat. At 11 we met the tugboat from the Point, got aboard, and bobbed about out on the Bay until the boat from Baltimore came along. From her we got some of the boys who missed connections at Boston. Among the number were Jess. Dewey and Johnny Ogden, who had come on to Baltimore by rail. My home grub gloriously met all drafts, and I ate the last of it this morning, for breakfast.

Parties of our men now go across to Virginia every day, for wood. So far as fuel is concerned, we are living off the enemy's country.

Not more than half our furloughed men have got back yet, and they will probably be straggling along for some time.

Afternoon.—My furlough to go to Washington has just gone to headquarters for indorsement, and I shall be off within two or three days. Frank Wasley sent me word that he and Irene would like to see me, so I went up and called. They were living as cozy as could be, and I had a jolly visit. They have two tents, boarded up and the walls neatly papered, making two very attractive rooms.

CXXXVI

Point Lookout, Md., *Friday, March 25, 1864.*

I BELIEVE I was never lamer or more absolutely used up than I am right at this present moment, the result of my participation in a great snowball battle, yesterday, between the Second and Twelfth. I emerged with both eyes blacked and a big cut over one, with minor contusions too numerous to mention, and thoroughly soaked and bedraggled from top to bottom. The Twelfth turned out *en masse*, which was more than our fellows did, as half of them were lying in their bunks, asleep, having been on guard the night before, while our subs didn't care nor dare to mix into anything so strenuous. The Twelfth mustered three men to our one, but we held up our end in good shape. At the close both sides got to throwing ice and bricks, and several men received quite severe injuries.

It was a great storm that brought that snow down upon us. It set in Tuesday, and at 9 o'clock in the evening was at its height—the fiercest storm, by all odds, I have ever seen in this part of the country. I slept in a bunk in the company cook-house. Snugly curled up, I slept perhaps a couple hours, when I woke up and decided to straighten out my cramped limbs. I opened out like a jack-knife, took just one second to catch my breath, and pulled up again like a turtle going into his shell. I had rammed both head and feet into a snowdrift. The next morning the inside of our tent was like a view in the arctic regions—everything covered or filled with snow. In front of the tent was a drift five feet deep. I guess it was about the toughest snowstorm this part of Maryland ever experienced.

Evening.—I have a little piece of news which I know will make your heart glad. I have decided not to go to Washington nor to make any further move for a commission. The move served as an anchor to windward in case I should otherwise have to go back to company duty under Gordon. I appreciated that it was a good deal like deserting you to go off again, perhaps for years. But things have come my way, and I do not want a commission now any more than I have in the past, but will come home and settle down in a few weeks.

No sooner did I make known my disinclination to go to Washington than an order was made out detailing me again as regimental P. M., and I am once more on my old job. Oh, it was sweet—the way I threw the hooks into the captain! I was in the adjutant's office, playing cribbage, when Gordon came in. Just as he was going out he turned to me and said, "Well, Haynes, when do you expect your furlough back?" "I don't know when it will come," I answered, nonchalently, "but probably before long." "Well," he snapped back, "if it doesn't come in a day or two I'll have to give you a gun and put you on duty." "All right!" I said—and butter wouldn't have melted in my mouth. But no sooner had he gone than John Cooper, the adjutant, turned to Hen. Everett and said, "Make out a special order detailing Mart. for special duty at these headquarters, and serve it on Captain Gordon." The thing was done so quickly that Gordon was hardly back to his tent before the order reached him. It tickled Bill Ramsdell and my particular gang immensely, and I could see them going around and laughing and slapping each other on the back.

Saturday, March 26.

I have been at work today fixing up my tent, and expect to move into it tonight. The Washington mail is taken off, which makes my already light work much lighter. The boat is needed in carrying troops to the Peninsula, which the camp strategists think it likely will be Grant's line of advance on Richmond. And it is also the general impression that we will leave here before many weeks.

CXXXVII

Point Lookout, Md., *March 28, 1864.*

HAVE got my old tent in running order again, fixed somewhat as it was before the Pendleton disaster overtook it. It does seem good to be back doing business at the old stand. But still it does not look exactly homelike yet. For a stove I have got one of the little sheet-iron conical "Sibleys." It was donated by Charlie Shute, the quartermaster, but he had no stovepipe for me. But I made a raise of four lengths in Bailey's sutler shop, and stole one length down in the company, which was sufficient for my purpose, and the stove works to perfection. But yesterday and today have been so very, very pleasant that there has been but little need of any fire. Warm, summery days, with the sun shining and the robins flying.

Yesterday morning I was awakened, very early, by a violent banging which threatened to burst in my door. I asked, in the polite manner customary in camp, who was there, and the reply that came left no doubt: "Hey, *Muggins!* Get up and let me in here, won't you?" Only one of all my old school crowd remembers and still hails me by my schoolboy nickname—"Muggins." I tumbled out of bed in a hurry and opened the door to our old friend Charlie Wilson, just in on the boat from Portsmouth, Va. [Charles H. Wilson, of Manchester, until discharged for disability a member of the New Hampshire battalion First New England Volunteer Cavalry, and then in the employ of the Quartermaster Department at Portsmouth, Va.] He was going back last night, but he enjoyed himself so well yesterday that he decided to accidentally miss the boat. He goes back tonight—that is, if he does not accidentally get left again.

Tuesday, March 29.

One day nearer home, and only sixty-seven more are between us. I have a card almanac hung up, and as soon as a day passes I scratch it off, just as I have heard of men doing who were going to be hanged. The fine weather I was bragging about has changed to cold and windy, with every indication of a coming storm. Charlie Wilson started back last night, and I went down to see him off. I am messing now with the cooks, down at the company cook house, and you may be sure we have the best of rations and plenty of them.

The wind is piping up furiously, and my old tent is shaking and creaking like a ship in a gale, but I guess she will weather it. Charlie Wilson sent his regards—come to think of it, I guess it was his love.

CXXXVIII

Point Lookout, Md., *April 5, 1864.*

THE mail boat did not go out last night, owing to the storm, and it bids fair to be much rougher tonight. It is an awful storm we are having, and I would like to see the sun once more and feel its warmth.

Yesterday General Marston was relieved by General Hinks, and from this the boys look for an early transfer of the regiment to the front, as Marston will probably want us with him, while Hinks would naturally prefer his own old regiment, the Nineteenth Massachusetts. The paymaster is expected here day after tomorrow to make what will probably be the last payment we will receive in the southern country.

A drop of water comes through the tent occasionally and strikes this paper with unerring accuracy, but I am bound to write in spite of it. Jess. Dewey and I are going up the river for sea shells the first fair day. He is now "right general guide" for the regiment, and has his time to himself quite as much as I do, so there is nothing to stand in the way of our little expedition when the weather will permit. The Veteran Volunteers have returned from their furloughs, some of them completely "busted," so far as finances are concerned.

Wednesday, April 6.

Orders have just come for our regiment to be ready to embark tomorrow morning. We are to take two days' rations, and are going, probably, to either Norfolk or Yorktown. I may stay here a day or two, or may not, to look after the mail. The officers of the regiment have for some time been making great preparations for a grand ball to come off tomorrow night. It was to have been held in the chapel, and as it would not sound well to talk of a dance in the church, the affair was designated as a "picnic." But it is all the same now. Some of the officers do not relish the idea of leaving

the quarters they have fitted up so comfortably and at considerable expense. Frank Wasley swears he will burn his when he has to leave it, orders to the contrary notwithstanding.

Bill Pendleton has been down to headquarters, and he says Gen. Marston says we are going to Norfolk, and that we will have an easier time than we are having here. Marston has been appointed military governor of Norfolk. As for myself, if I fare as well where we are going as I have here I will have no reason to complain.

CXXXIX

Yorktown, Va., *April 11, 1864.*

HERE I am again, only a couple miles from the spot where we camped two years ago. I have been looking around a little since we arrived here. Yesterday Hen. Everett, Jesse Dewey and I paid a visit to that old camp, and it was intensely interesting to us. The company streets and the ditches around the tents were there almost as we left them, and even much of the litter of the camp. I found the site of my tent and sat down on the very spot where, two years ago, I used to rest after a night in the trenches, and where the letters addressed to "Miss Nealie T. Lane" were written. I picked up one of the old tent-pins, and intend to make some little souvenir of it. Also a piece of shell and a fragment of boiler from the old Magruder sawmill, the music of which was continually in our ears.

Perhaps you remember about an old tentmate of mine named Damon. When we were here then he hollowed out an oven in the steep bank of a ravine, and as that was one of the institutions of Company I, we hunted it up. We found it in perfect condition and as good as new, and as we stood there Damon was right before my eyes again, bobbing about and learnedly discoursing on the peculiar advantages of ovens built on that peculiar plan.

We are camped just outside the works around Yorktown, on a plateau overlooking the York river and, far off to the east, the blue waters of Chesapeake Bay—on the whole, a very pleasant location. The first night we were here we had no tents, but they came the next day, although not as many as we needed, and we are, conse-

quently, somewhat crowded. It was the intention to give Jess. Dewey and I a tent together, but we will have to wait. But at the rate our subs are deserting there will be tents enough and room enough before long. About a hundred have made tracks, so far.

Yesterday the Fourth U. S. Colored Regiment left here. One of the officers went out of this company. They are going to Point Lookout. The fellow I would have gone to Washington with if things had not shaped themselves to my liking in the regiment, is back with a captain's commission. You see what I escaped. Col. Bailey tells me I ought to go up anyway, whether I accept or not—it would help pass the time away. But I tell him I am getting along very comfortably as I am, that I can enjoy myself better with the regiment than I could loafing around Washington, and that if I had wanted a commission I could have had one long, long ago. I am quartering now in the cook-tent, and have very good accommodations. It is understood we are going to Williamsburg soon. Hen. Pillsbury says Col. Bailey is determined to go home when the old men do, and most of the officers are of the same mind. We have just drawn rations of cracked pease, beans, rice, smoked sides, &c., so there are no signs of immediate starvation.

CXL

Yorktown, Va., *April 13, 1864.*

NOT a bit of mail have we had, until yesterday, since our arrival here. Then George Colby came down from Point Lookout, bringing what had accumulated there.

We are expecting to have a military execution of a deserter this afternoon. He is one of our subs, going under the name of John Egin. He was taken while trying to make his way into the rebel lines, was tried yesterday by court martial, and condemned to be shot today between the hours of five and six o'clock in the afternoon. He was making for the rebel lines when he met a man in a gray uniform, and he gave himself dead away. He didn't know that a gray uniform between the lines was pretty sure to cover one of our scouts, so he unbosomed himself, and was then about-faced and marched back to Yorktown.

Just outside our camp is the grave of a man who was executed a little over a month ago. He was on guard over a prisoner, at Williamsburg, whom he allowed to escape, carrying important information to the rebels. Most of the large number who have deserted since we got here have been picked up at one place or another. Their utter ignorance of the geography of the country has in many instances led to their undoing. It is probable that several of them will meet the same fate that has been decreed for Egin. The second of Gordon's precious subs, made corporals to spite the old men, made tracks day before yesterday, but was picked up and brought back yesterday. When the bulk of the old men are discharged, and the subs have all run away, and most of the officers have been mustered out, where will the glorious old Second Regiment New Hampshire Volunteers be? I am glad I have not got to stay and serve any longer, for it can never again be the old Second except in name.

Close to our camp is a contraband settlement familiarly known as "Slab City." There are several hundred houses. It is laid out in streets, the shanties, built of slabs, split logs, &c., averaging about half the size of an ordinary New Hampshire woodshed. Jess. and I have explored it from one end to the other, and it was as good as a circus. They have quite a corps of teachers, both white and black, and there is more religion to the square inch than in any other part of the United States. There are stores, with little stocks of goods that wouldn't inventory twenty dollars apiece, and the signs are fine examples of phonetic spelling. Here is one: "GROSERIS STOOR." And on two that we saw appeared the magic word "GROSEYS"—the orthography evidently dictated from the same fount of knowledge. The mechanical execution was on a par with the spelling.

Friday, April 15.

This forenoon I witnessed the execution of two deserters from our regiment. One was the John Egin I have spoken of before, who was respited for a day. The other was a man who has gone by the name of Holt, but who last night acknowledged that his name was McGuire, and that he was from Yorkshire, England, where he had a wife and two children. The Second Regiment was drawn up in line, facing the execution ground, with two loaded cannon in position to rake it, one negro regiment in line to the rear of the

Second, and another drawn up at right angles, on its left. When the troops were in position, the two condemned men rode upon the ground, each seated upon his coffin in the bottom of a wagon. Arriving at the spot where they were to be shot to death, they got down from the wagons, their coffins were taken out and placed end to end before the open graves. Then the firing squad of twelve men were drawn up about a dozen paces in front of them. They knelt by their coffins while a Catholic priest, who had come up from Fortress Monroe, conducted the appropriate offices of the church. Then they arose, their handcuffs were taken off, and they removed their coats and vests. Their eyes were bandaged, their wrists tied with white handkerchieves, and each seated on his coffin. What an awful moment it must have been for them when they heard the click of the gun-locks as the executioners cocked their pieces. The next instant they fell back across their coffins, each pierced by five bullets. Holt did not die for several moments, and raised his hands a number of times. There are some eighty or ninety deserters under guard down town, and more will follow in the way these two have gone.

George Colby is down here, and is going into a little sutler business on his own hook, as he does not think Mr. Bailey will take the risk and bother of doing business under present conditions.

CXLI

Yorktown, Va., *April 21. 1864.*

TODAY is, I believe, the third anniversary of my entrance upon a military life. It is entertaining to hear the old fellows count up the number of days that lie between them and home. The 9th of May appears to be the generally accepted date of release, but I am afraid the wish is father to the thought. The first thing I hear in the morning is something like this: "Well, only eighteen days more!" or "Only eighteen loaves more of army bread for me!"

Since I wrote last we have moved our camp about a mile, and are now in a delightful location, on a smooth, grassy slope close to the river and near the spot where Egin and Holt were executed. At the right of the camp is the last parallel in which I put in a night's work two years ago. The very tree under which I shoveled so dil-

igently is still standing, close by an angle of the trench. I sometimes catch myself imagining the seige is still going on, and when the sunset gun is fired, involuntary duck my head below imaginary earthworks and listen for the rush of the shell.

A great army is being gathered here. Troops are pouring in, by regiments and by brigades. Several regiments have arrived from Hilton Head, S. C., among them the Fourth New Hampshire. I hear the Third is expected. The negro troops who have been stationed here during the winter are going to Fortress Monroe, and from there, I understand, to Port Royal, and troops are coming here from Norfolk and Portsmouth. The Tenth and Thirteenth New Hampshire are on the way and will be here today. We will soon be ready for another advance on Richmond, and, to tell the truth, I rather like the idea of seeing a little more of active service before I go home. Gen. Smith [W. F.—"Baldy,"] who, it is supposed, will lead this column of advance on Richmond, arrived yesterday, and was escorted to headquarters with great parade, which there were indications was not exactly to his liking. He is a western general, one of Grant's favorites, a big, rough-looking, grizzled old fellow, without any frills, and I hope will not disappoint expectations.

It was at first intended to send this regiment to Williamsburg, but there were so many desertions it was not deemed advisable, and we may be kept here. But the execution of the two deserters has had a good effect, and there has not been a single case of desertion since that time.

CXLII

Williamsburg, Va., *April 20, 1864.*

SINCE my last letter we have made our first hitch up the Peninsula, and are now about two miles from Williamsburg and one mile from the spot where, two years ago the 5th of May, we had the little scrimmage known as the battle of Williamsburg. We got our orders to march last Friday afternoon, started about sunset, and marched until one o'clock, when we arrived at our present location. Now, who do you suppose I saw last Friday? None other than our old friend Frank Morrill. I was just out of camp at Yorktown,

heading for town so as to get my mail off before we started up here, when I heard my name shouted, and turning around, saw some one galloping toward me. And who should it be but Frank! The Third Regiment has not come up yet, and it is not definitely known that they will come, but Frank is signal officer on Gen. Terry's staff and so came up with the General. [I never saw him again. He was mortally wounded, before Petersburg, in July.]

I have to go clear to Yorktown, now, for my mail. I leave here about one in the afternoon and get back about sunset. For a horse they have given me a great, stout, rawboned "buckskin," a hard-rider, and the immediate physical effects on a fellow as soft and out of practice as I am have been slightly disastrous. The first day I wore out the seat of my pants, and it didn't stop wearing when it got through the cloth. As I have to make the trip every day, I am having a pretty tough time getting acclimated, as it were.

Everything here indicates that we will soon be on the move. Orders were issued, day before yesterday, limiting the personal baggage of officers below the rank of brigadier-general to one small valise—to become operative in five days. There are to be only two wagons for each regiment, one of these exclusively for the hospital department. We may not move, though, for a fortnight. Whether or not we are to be discharged before the 4th of June is the main subject of discussion now. If we are not, we may, and probably will, have a chance to see "the dirty Chickahominy" again, and possibly the city of Richmond. When we old fellows are discharged, the Second Regiment is likely to be still further reduced in numbers by transfers to the navy, as permitted by recent orders. Now that I am counting my time by days, I am not troubling myself about how large or how small the regiment may be.

CXLIII

Williamsburg, Va., *May 4, 1864.*

THIS letter may be the last I will write you from the army, as there is a prospect of our being discharged on the 9th of May. Our "final statements" were made out yesterday and forwarded to headquarters. But they may decide at headquarters that

our time is not up until June. In that event we will have a chance to march a piece in this "On to Richmond" movement. A big pier is being built on the James River, about three miles from here, indicating that we are to take boats there for some point—perhaps to go up the river as far as Fort Darling and attempt to take it as a preliminary to the capture of Richmond.

We are having nice weather now, but night before last we had a great thunder shower. It came up very suddenly, about sunset, and was the blackest, ugliest-looking sky I ever saw. The rebels have, for some time, been very busy planting torpedoes in the roads leading toward Richmond, and a few days ago a squad of four were scooped in while engaged in this laudable undertaking.

Day before yesterday two regiments of negro cavalry came up from Norfolk, and yesterday I rode up from Yorktown with a couple of the troopers. They kept me in a roar of laughter relating their experiences in the army, which were inexpressibly funny.

CXLIV

Camp between Bermuda Hundred
and Petersburg, Va.,
May 9, 1864.

I HAVE just time to write a short letter before going to the Landing to attend to my mail. The indications are that we are going to have a fight today. The Corps has marched out toward the rebel lines, and now a long train of ambulances is going by, which is ominous. This is the day when the old men of Company I figure their time is out, and it is not impossible that some of them may get their final discharges today. I shall go to the Landing, about four miles, for my mail, at ten o'clock, and then hurry out to the front to see how matters are progressing.

We broke camp at Williamsburg on the 4th and embarked from a temporary wharf on the James River. The next morning the bulk of the expedition came up from Fortress Monroe, and it was a great spectacle. As far as the eye could reach swarmed vessels of every description—transports, tugs, ironclads and gunboats. About dark we were at Bermuda Hundred, at the mouth of the Appomattox River. We mounted men were on a different boat from the regi-

ment, and after a vain hunt of a couple hours we gave up trying to find the Second that night and camped by the roadside, picketing our horses and with our saddles for pillows. The next day the troops advanced to our present position, and Heckman's brigade, of our division, had a smart little fight. Yesterday our boys were throwing up a redoubt down by the Appomattox, but today the work is discontinued and the men have gone out to fight.

I met John Hynes yesterday, on the road to the Landing. [John R., an old-time Manchester printer, in the Third N. H. Regiment.]

CXLV

Camp near Bermuda Hundred, Va.,
May 13, 1864.

YESTERDAY MORNING the Second set out, with the rest of the army, for a raid on the Danville Railroad, and are expected back today, as they took rations for but two days. My duties required that I should stay here, and right glad was I, as it rained nearly all day and through the night, and I was much more comfortable under a good shelter tent than I would have been plugging through the mud. There were about half a dozen left in my camp squad, and we had a jolly time of it. We bought a beef liver and some potatoes for dinner, and sirloin steak and potatoes for supper, and Johnny Powell and I fixed up a tent in which we slept as snug as a bug in a rug.

Day before yesterday Gordon got instructions to make out our final statements, which are the preliminaries to a discharge. He was at work on them when marching orders came, when, of course, he suspended operations until he gets back from this raid, which will probably be today.

May 17.

I think it is about time to finish this letter. The army has been for five days on a movement against Fort Darling, and got back today. [Here follows an account of the Fort Darling expedition, snbstantially as given in the succeeding letter, and the reason for duplicating which is made clear in that letter.]

CXLVI

Headquarters Second N. H. V.,
Point of Rocks, Va., *May 18, 1864.*

THIS morning I received your letter, dated from Manchester. Yesterday I sent a letter off directed to New London, but as you have concluded not to go there I suppose your chances of getting it right off are not very good. So, to relieve your anxiety, I write again. Our date of discharge has at last been definitely settled, and you need not expect me before the 7th of June. That is General Butler's fiat, which is law.

This army has had some fighting to do since it landed here. At this very moment the rebels are attacking a portion of our intrenched line not half a mile from where I am sitting, and there is a terrific uproar of cannon and musketry. A week ago the army went out on an expedition to stir up the rebels. They skirmished with them, drove them toward Fort Darling, and took the outer line of rifle-pits. I took the regimental mail up, and found the boys within five hundred yards of a large rebel fort, over which two big garrison flags were floating. They were behind a good log breastwork, and our skirmishers were well out in front, behind logs and stumps, popping away so industriously that the rebels were not working a single one of their cannon. I stayed as long as I could find any excuse, to distribute my mail and to watch the sport, then rode back to camp. The next morning, before I had rolled out of my blankets, I heard heavy firing up the river, and knew that a battle was on. It was a couple hours before I could get started with my mail. The road, after I had gone a piece, was full of wounded men on foot and ambulances loaded with mangled humanity. One driver told me he had in his wagon the body of Captain Platt, who was killed by a bullet in the head.

When I reached the regiment I learned the full story of the fight. The morning was a very foggy one, and the rebels crawled silently toward our lines, and then rushed for our breastworks. But there was an obstacle in the path that they hadn't dreamed of. Our fellows had busied themselves during the night in weaving telegraph wires among the stumps out at the front, and when the rebs charged they suddenly found themselves sprawling every-which-way, while our boys were pumping lead into them as fast as they could load

and fire. The rebs came on again and again, until the ground in front of the Second was carpeted with dead and wounded rebels. But the rebels managed to get through the lines to the right and the left, and the army fell back and formed a new line of battle a mile or less to the rear of the old position. Although there was light skirmishing all day, at some points, the rebels had done about all the attacking they cared to for one day.

I stayed with the regiment all day, to see the fun if there was any more going. One time I throught there would be. The brigade was called to attention and moved forward in battle line, across the fields, toward the woods where the morning's fight had taken place. Old "Buckskin" and I thoughtlessly jogged along behind the Second. Before we were within ordinary rifle range of the woods, a bullet "pinged" by not far from me. Pretty soon there was another. And then another! Looking up and down, I saw I was the only mounted man on the line, and it dawned upon me that some sharpshooter with a long-range rifle had picked me out as the boss of the expedition and was trying to get me. And he could shoot, too. My pride wouldn't let me turn and run, badly as I wanted to, and I was about to drop to the ground and walk when the bugles sounded a halt, and we about-faced and marched back—and I was mighty glad to go.

During the night our army came back into the camps. This morning the rebels appeared in front of our lines and lively skirmishing has been going on all day. The army is engaged in throwing up intrenchments, the Second working as hard as any of them.

CXLVII

Headquarters Second N. H. V.,
Near Petersburg, Va., *May 24, 1864.*

THE discharge of veteran regiments in this command has already begun. Yesterday I went down to Bermuda Hundred with my tentmate, Johnny Powell, and on our way back we met the First Connecticut Heavy Artillery on their way home, their time having expired. The present camp of the Second is delightfully located, in a beautiful pine grove, shady, cool and clean, just to the

rear of our rifle-pits. I now have about fifteen minutes' work each day, carrying the outgoing mail down to brigade headquarters, a distance of a dozen rods, and bringing the regimental mail up over the same course.

Colonel Bailey is determined to go home when we do, and probably will. The regiment will then be reduced below the minimum entitling it to a colonel. Also, if War Department orders are enforced, it will have to be consolidated into companies of one hundred men each and superfluous officers mustered out. Bailey has written to Major Davis, Gen. Butler's Assistant-Adjutant-General, expressing his wish to be mustered out with the old men and stating the facts in regard to the regiment. His wife, I know, has set her foot down against his staying in the army longer than he is obliged to—just as mine did.

We are having a very quiet time along the lines, just now. For two or three days there has hardly been a shot fired. We have intrenchments behind which we can defy the whole rebel army. But the other night we had noise enough down a little to our right. I had just turned in when it started, and in five minutes there was such a riot that the regiment turned out and manned the breastworks. But our section of the line was not molested, and in half an hour the firing had degenerated into an occasional straggling shot, and the regiment turned in again.

Well, as Bill Pendleton says, "Every day is like an inch on a man's nose."

CXLVIII

Headquarters Second N. H. V.,
Near Petersburg, Va., *Friday, May 27, 1864.*

IN my last letter, written three days ago, I promised to write one more letter from the army. The chances are that if I do not write *now* I may not have another opportunity, as we are evidently getting in trim to move within a day or two, and we may not get settled down again until we are discharged. Last night an order came here that all men in the regiment who are unable to travel in light marching order shall be sent at once to the division hospital. We will doubtless move very soon—perhaps before tomorrow morn-

ing. Hen. Pillsbury has just come in with the news, coming from Dr. Merrow, that we will march within a few hours, a good part of Butler's force going to reinforce Grant. If so, we will have some hard marching to do.

Now that the time for my release draws nigh, I must say I am getting very impatient. Bill Ramsdell says: "When I get my discharge in my hand, I shall feel as if I had shaken off a man who for three years has had his hand at my throat, trying to strangle me." And with his experience, I do not wonder that he feels that way.

Since I began this letter the preparations for departure have set in in good earnest. The shovels which we have used in throwing up defensive works are being loaded up, the sick men have taken up their line of march for the hospitals, and the cooks are busy preparing two days' rations. If Grant has got Lee back pretty well toward Richmond, it may not be a very hard march to join him. But if he is still at the Anna rivers we will have some right smart "huffing" to do. At any rate, I will not be troubled with a heavy load—only what I may need to make myself comfortable. I have turned in my horse, and will "frog it" with the boys, which will be rather pleasant, and I will not have the horse to care for. It has been some time since I have received a letter from you, but suppose you do not write for fear I may not get it, being liable to start for home any day. Good bye, for a very short time.

This was the Soldier Boy's last letter from the army. The Eighteenth Army Corps did join Grant, being transported to White House, on the Pamunky, by water. The Second gloriously maintained its ancient reputation in the sanguinary battle of Cold Harbor, and an ill fate took heavy toll from the little handful of old men whose faces were already turned joyously toward home and the loved ones. Three company commanders—including Captain Gordon—were killed, and the rank and file were decimated. Immediately after this terrible sacrifice the remnant returned to New Hampshire and were mustered out.